TELOS

NUMBER 120 SUMMER 2001

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Teodoro K. de la Grange: On Terrorism
Juan E. Corradi: On Violence and Terror
Claude Karnoouh: The US Military Response
James Kulk: Liquid Terrorism
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Articles:

Lev Gudkov: Russia — A Society in Transition?
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C. P. Long & R. A. Lee, Jr.: Rethinking the Economy of Principles
Claude Karnoouh: Heidegger on History and Politics

Review:

James Kalb: The Dilemma of Managerial Liberalism

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Introduction

Every once in a while something happens, and suddenly everything seems to change — or, at least, everyone finally becomes aware that things are not the same anymore. The September 11 terrorist attack is such an event. While anti-American terrorism is nothing new, the fact that hitherto it usually took place abroad and primarily against military targets, made it feel distant and not relevant to everyday life. Not anymore. Now the implications of globalization, the decline of nation-states as self-contained entities, US vulnerability, the obsolescence of Cold War political categories, and the immense disparities — both material and spiritual — between advanced societies and premodern ones have suddenly registered on collective consciousness and, even more belatedly, on "theoretical" thinking caught, as usual, wallowing in the comfortable dogmatism of academic life. Welfare state liberalism is now forced to rethink its flaccid universal axioms about its arrogant self-righteousness, tolerance, racial profiling, citizenship, identity, patriotism, civil rights and all the rest of the shibboleths that Enlightenment ideology had refined during the West's confrontation with the bureaucratic collectivism of a communism that, a decade after its collapse, appears more and more like its mirror image.

Organized on the spur of the moment, the "Symposium on Terrorism" in this issue consists of a set of responses by *Telos* editors and collaborators concerning September 11 and its geopolitical and institutional consequences. Although written from different perspectives, practically all of the contributions seem to agree on one main point. Despite what everyone acknowledges as a major historical break, not only is it unlikely that there will be any major new radical breaks with the status quo, but attempts to confront the crisis are already accelerating the kind of trends that have been unfolding at least since WWII.

In a one-dimensional universe with no alternative critical visions, and therefore only dimly aware of its own shortcomings, the urgency of the moment translates into trying harder to do more of the same. The result is

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more centralization of power in Washington, the strengthening of US world hegemony, the widening of the gap between advanced and premodern societies, the further erosion of privacy, the bureaucratization of everyday life — all processes that characterized the second half of the 20th century. This is why, compelled to respond to an unprecedented provocation by an anonymous (although rather familiar) foe with no definite address, all the US government could do is go to war against the most likely candidate for enemy status — despite the fact that Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest countries, stuck with one of the most barbaric governments ever. What to do about the thousands of potential terrorists breeding throughout the Islamic Third World, or about the new chemical or bio-technological weapons available to phantom religious fanatics waging apocalyptic postmodern wars against entire civilizations, no one knows. The only potentially positive aspect of all this is a new awareness in the West that it is now imperative to stop pontificating about the virtues of a universalistic ideology that has paralyzed concrete thinking for over a generation, and start taking seriously the kind of criticisms that up to now have been marginalized for their failure to accept the inevitability of modernity and the perfection of liberal-democracy.

The first thing that will have to go is the criticism of the concept of tolerance for the intolerant — and therefore of its pseudo-universalism. Tolerance is a particular Western value, which applies only to those who practice it. It excludes not only those who reject it, but also those who tolerate its rejection — something the Bush administration has indirectly acknowledged as part of its justification for moving against Afghanistan. The world is as diverse as liberal ideology preaches (but does not really heed), and in all probability it is likely to stay that way. Some forms of cultural particularity, such as the Taliban's reading of Islam, may well include intolerance of others. This state of affairs requires discarding the liberal-democratic assumption that, in some sense or other, the end of history has been reached, and the whole world in on the way to Westernizing, i.e., that eventually everyone will be homogenized within a multiculturalism limited to gastronomical or sartorial idiosyncrasies, but strictly regulated by "politically correct" liberal rules of behavior.

In more practical terms, this means that, in the same way that fundamentalists do not tolerate the West — in fact, the most extreme among them boast about exterminating all "infidels" — they can no longer be tolerated by the West and now face systematic ostracism everywhere outside of the most backward parts of the Islamic world. This does not sound like

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the end of the world: it is difficult to cross the ocean on a camel and, besides, most fundamentalists do not seem all that inclined to wander too far away from their tents. The problem, however, is that, when they do — especially in order to wreak havoc among the infidels — they turn out to be those among them with wealth and a Western education that makes them indistinguishable not only from moderate Muslims, but also from most Westerners. The result is that, during a war with no beginning and no end, waged everywhere and by whatever means, all Muslims tend to be at risk. The upshot here is that unless the rest of the Muslims eradicate the terrorist cancer in their ranks, *all* Muslims are potentially suspect, thus precipitating a state of global civil war — precisely the outcome the September 11 terrorists have sought to bring about.

This state of affairs implies that US immigration laws (and those of European countries), which liberal ideology during the past years, following strict universalist rules of political correctness, has tried to render as neutral as possible, are now likely to be subject to *ethnic profiling*, i.e., the exclusion of *all* Muslim immigrants. This rediscovery of the inevitability of rational discrimination means that entry into the US is likely to be limited exclusively to those immigrants willing to assimilate. Contrary to multicultural ideology, the US does have a distinct culture — even if one whose most distinctive feature is tolerance of other cultures, as long as they mind their own business and do not bother the rest. It is (and has been) insane to allow those unwilling to play by the rules to come in and demand the right to impose their own peculiar practices, even when it conflicts with North American culture as, e.g., was the case with certain sects in Canada insisting on carrying hidden weapons or wearing turbans when working as uniformed public officials.

Such a rude awakening will also have to extend to all kinds of "profiling," racial or otherwise: in fact, the very concept of "prejudice," understood as internalized and codified past experience, rather than pure irrational hatred of some particular group, will need to be seriously reexamined. If, e.g., middle-aged white women between 47 and 52 were statistically responsible for 75% of jewelry thefts, while comprising only 3% of the population, then it would make a good deal of sense to watch very closely any one belonging to such a group when they enter jewelry stores — despite the fact that most members of that group have never entertained the possibility of stealing anything. Color, ethnic, religious, linguistic, etc. blindness is thus likely to be dropped by the wayside when the urgency of the crisis restores a modicum of rationality to those blinded

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by homogenizing ideological agendas. At any rate, no one ever took this nonsense seriously, except in public pronouncements, which have hitherto been subjected to the most strict censorship.

Other post-Cold War illusions, such as the myth that the introduction of formal democracy in the political system automatically brings about modernization, will also fall by the wayside, along with the naive Enlightenment ideology of inevitable progress. As Lev Gudkov shows in his evaluation of the reforms that have taken place in Russia since the disintegration of the USSR, the elimination of a rusty totalitarianism patina and the institutionalization of formal liberal democratic procedures have not precipitated any substantial reforms. Everything remains practically the same as it was before 1991. The new Putin regime deploys the same mechanisms as the old communist dictators to organize the same corrupt consensus, and with exactly the same results: permanent stagnation. Russia today is literally "living off the fat of the land," by selling its natural resources to finance an old, inefficient industrial apparatus in order to keep existing power relation unchanged — or worse, tip them even more in favor of the current ruling elite.

The same is true of Europe, which has settled for a flat conformism living off the prosperity brought about by the computer revolution. As Frank Adler shows, even in France, where the only opposition to the left-liberal consensus had come from the radical Right, the situation is changing. Both of the main branches of the so-called radical Right are fading rapidly, not because the French electorate is coming to its senses, but because those issues that made the National Front into the kind of political phenomenon it became in the early 1990s have been gradually co-opted by the political center. The old statism thrives, life is good, and . . . "please pass the croissants."

The new crisis may also sweep away old Cold War habits, such as the anti-colonialist/anti-imperialist stance of whatever remains of the Left opposition, still charging the windmills of capitalism, now rebaptized as "globalization," in the name of . . . what? The old socialism long since discredited everywhere? Colonialism is a thing of the past and, with the realization that capitalism (or globalization) is the only game in town, imperialism today can refer only to the inevitable unequal exchange resulting from asymmetrical relations between weak and strong economic agents in the global marketplace. Thus, as André C. Drainville shows in his article "On the Relevance of the Avant-Garde," opposition to globalization becomes aestheticized and degenerates into a vague search for "a

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radical concept of freedom and a sense of infinite possibilities." But, as Hegel showed in the closing pages of the *Phenomenology*, if this radical concept of freedom does not want to turn into "terror," it must avoid at least some of its less desirable of all the "infinite possibilities" and avoid counterproductive results, such as the bureacratization of the globe in the name of defending the usual "oppressed." After all, this is how all the worst crimes of the 20th century have been justified. In other words, this turn of events has historical precedents. Lacking any concrete grasp of economic and political realities, the amorphous anti-globalization movement risks collapsing in the worst kind of conformism once it realizes the futility of its efforts. This is precisely what happened with the avant-garde's earlier efforts to vindicate radical freedom in the abstract, and to explore "infinite possibilities," first by celebrating modernity and then by condemning it, but ultimately ending up defending the horrors of either fascism or communism. September 11 may well mean the exhaustion of that modernist permissiveness that has allowed hoards of protesters to disrupt any attempts to regulate global economic relations. This may pave the way for the development of new forms of global accountability and negotiated consensus, before the protesters age and, like the historical avant-garde before them, fold their exuberance into conformity. Given the conceptual vacuity of their pronouncements, there is even the threat that their so-called "cosmopolitan democracy" may end up being a new and improved version of the various East European "people's democracy," involving not just the bureaucratization of national life but of the whole world.

The destruction of the World Trade Center may well have had, as "collateral damage," the belated acknowledgment of the fundamentalist character of Enlightenment ideology as the systematic suppression of critical thought. Now, the early warnings of the Frankfurt School concerning the "dialectic of enlightenment" and its diabolical reversal into the kind of mythology typical of all fundamentalisms may no longer be dismissed so easily through communicative chicanery. In his reconstruction of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* as "geneology critique," Roger Foster convincingly demonstrates not only how the charge of "performative contradiction" against it does not hold, but also how this classical text manages to trace the history of the repression of critical reflection.

During the past few years, however, Critical Theory has either become integrated as another irrelevant academic subdiscipline, or dismissed altogether, in favor of more fashionable, global indictments of Western metaphysics as a doomed process calling for a return to a mysterious Being.

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This critique is briefly articulated by Claude Karnoouh's summary account of Heidegger's view of history and politics as "events." Yet, the blanket condemnation of technology as terminally dehumanizing and the concomitant call for a return to Being remain unconvincing. As Christopher Long and Richard Lee argue in a related article, the metaphysical tradition Heidegger is said to have destroyed is not the only one: there is a long-standing para-metaphysical tradition that avoids the pitfalls of traditional metaphysics and manages to safeguard particularity and, consequently, the possibility of critical thought. By contraposing Adorno to Heidegger, they show how thinking can be reoriented away from the possibilities of Being toward the actual encounter with concrete beings and issues, and how the "end of metaphysics" need not imply the end of a philosophy of principles. Given that September 11 may well turn out to be the most significant event inaugurating the 21st century, such a tradition, despite all its ambiguities and aporias, becomes all the more relevant.

Paul Piccone and Gary Ulmen

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Russia — A Society in Transition?[1]

Lev Gudkov

It has been over 10 years since the dissolution of USSR and the collapse of the Soviet system. This anniversary is not so much a pretext for celebration, but an opportunity to evaluate Russia's post-Soviet development. The main question is how far the country has come from totalitarianism. Is it possible to talk about internal factors precipitating the radical transformation of totalitarian regimes, as if they were so stable that their collapse could only result from external pressure or military defeat? There are no guidelines for transforming totalitarian societies into something close to those with democratic systems and market economies. Here, the more or less successful experiences of Central and Western European countries cannot serve as models, because, among other things, of differences in size, the availability of nuclear weapons, and the type of political structure that existed before — whether they were empires or democracies.

The past decade has been evaluated in different ways. Egor Gaidar argues that "there has been a full-scale social revolution in Russia. . . . The political and economic system has changed radically."[2] Others see the decade as one of missed opportunities. Condoleezza Rice claims that although the old Soviet system collapsed and some steps have been taken toward democracy, they are not institutionalized, and the balance of power has shifted so much in favor of the President that he often rules the country by decree. During Yeltsin's presidency, Russian state power was passive

1. Translated from Russian by Julia Kostova.

2. Egor Gaidar, "Revolutsiia ostalas' v XX veke — reformy prodolzhaiutsia v XXI," in *Izvestiia* (January 17, 2001), p. 9. Cf. also I. V. Starodubrovskaia and V. A. Mau, *The Challenge of Revolution. The Contemporary Russia in the Historical Perspective,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

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and static. The economy did not develop into a market economy, but into something else. The widespread barter system, quasi-banks, billions of rubles sent abroad or hidden in vaults, weird privatization schemes benefiting so-called "reformers," give the Russian economy a "medieval flair." What holds back Russian society, however, is not the economy or the political system, but the Russian way of thinking. According to Rice, improving cultural character, which is essential for the creation of a healthy civil society and a market economy, can take as long as a whole generation.[3]

The difference in these evaluations is due to different ideological approaches. Gaidar's position is a result of his traditional Russian longing for a great country; unlike earlier efforts, however, the power of this state should be achieved through the free market and democratic freedoms, not through repression and violence. "Liberalism" is not a goal, but a means, a strategy for reviving a "great country"; it is its most effective basis. The close connection of economic "liberalism" and "statism," i.e., the prioritizing of state interests, is not accidental. Gaidar and his supporters view the Russian predicament exclusively in terms of "economic determinism," almost Marxism: an inevitable choice out of a set of prepared strategies dealing with the "transition" from socialism to a modern society. Their adversaries believe that fantasizing about Russia becoming once again a superpower is destructive, that the difference between then and now is determined not by economic factors, but by socio-cultural circumstances.

Optimists and Pessimists

Russian "liberals" (the advocates of a free market economy) argue that Russia's potential is still significant (considering the population's education and skills), and that the conditions necessary to complete market reforms have already been met, providing an opportunity for considerable growth. The prerequisites are a long period of "stabilization," which, in the absence of social consensus and widespread desire for change, is provided by a combination of permissible (and tolerable) political authoritarianism and violence — including some limitations on citizens' rights and freedoms: the authority of representative institutions, on the one hand, and the maximum possible freedom of economic activity, on the other. The combination of a democracy "regulated" from above and the deregulation of the economy, i.e., limiting the government's role to establishing general rules of economic behavior to promote, according to the

3. Condoleezza Rice, "Promoting the National Interests," in *Foreign Affairs*, 2000, No. 1.

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current leaders of the Union of Right Forces supporting Putin, Russia's integration into the global market, will eventually mean completing the phase of catch-up modernization.

General thinking is confined to a "revolution from above," i.e., the organization in one way or other of the executive power necessary for the reforms (through elections or co-optative "participation in government"). Presumably, policy goals have already been set, all the required tools are in place, and all that is needed now is the determination of a strong government to realize these plans. Precisely because of this government, today the "Right democrats" in Russia agree on different types of compromises and "deals with the devil," i.e., a hidden consensus on limiting democratic rights and freedoms, a refusal to criticize government policies, etc.

What remains in doubt, of course, is the executive's "political will," to whom Russian liberals are forced to ascribe virtuous reform out of a "desire to remain in history" (they could not come up with other motives). In other words, the particularity of Russian society is not taken into account, any more than is the character of its modernization, or the inertia of totalitarian socio-political structures. Finally, and most important, the population or its organizations do not seem to have the slightest interest in reforms, as can be seen by the lack of any solidarity and mass movements.

According to their liberal-authoritarian supporters, market reforms will be implemented in two stages: in the short run, an enlightened authoritarian regime committed to reforms will neutralize criticism, and suppresses any expression of mass discontent; in the long run, older segments of the population who still hold on to Soviet values will die out, resulting in the departure of a generation that used to be the foundation of the Soviet system.[4] This generational change plays the role of the missing link in building a "modern society" — a self-sufficient civil society, and the political, intellectual, and social forces able to bring it about. This is the most optimistic scenario for Russia's development, because no one believes anymore in a successful and relatively rapid adoption of models of democracy and of the free market, as occurred in Poland or Slovenia.

The "pessimists" evaluate the decade in generally negative terms. The expectations for a quick completion of modernization (democratization) in Russia during Gorbachev's *perestroika* now appears to have been an

4. Comparison of the reformers with Moses is widespread in Russian democratic circles: Moses led the Israelites through the desert for 40 years until they all died. The implication is that the mechanisms for reproducing totalitarianism will also die, i.e., that totalitarianism is an "external" or imported phenomenon not rooted in Russian history or culture.

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illusion hindering a realistic evaluation of the situation. They admit that the changes that have taken place so far have been significant: there is no longer a monopoly of the former Communist Party, while the centralized planning and direct allocation of goods and services has been replaced by a more elaborate system of budget and price controls on strategic products (electricity, raw materials, railroads, subsidized housing, agriculture, etc.). 70% of all companies have been privatized, the influence of the military-industrial complex has been diminished, etc. Yet, none of the projected reforms, on which the country's existence depends, are fully in place: they are either on hold or their goals have become problematic, both for the authorities and for public opinion.

This is especially true of the market economy, i.e., the adoption of key legal codes, without which it is impossible to modernize (first of all, laws concerning ownership, including land, bankruptcy, demonopolization, taxes, etc.), and, most important, the institutions necessary to ensure their application and the implementation of legal reforms (courts and prosecuting attorneys). Up to now, the whole legal system remains an inflexible, repressive apparatus meant to defend corporate (government) interests against those of private parties, i.e., independent businesses or civic organizations. Today, there are still no legal mechanisms for defending citizens and their interests (personal safety, philanthropy, private property) from bureaucratic arbitrariness. During the two recent Chechen wars, the announced military reforms — changes in military doctrine, the downsizing of the army, the shift to a professional army, the introduction of alternative services and other significant steps meant to demilitarize a totalitarian society — have been quietly put on the backburner by the military. Similarly, all projects to demonopolize the economy have been neutralized. In other words, if one looks at the real state of affairs, rather than at the government's decorative façades, during all these years not one social mechanism necessary for the reproduction of society independently of the state has been institutionalized. This means that, strictly speaking, there has been no "transformation" of the Soviet totalitarian system. Pessimists also point out that, along with visible signs of democratization (freedom to travel, access to information from other countries, etc.), there has been an involution of democratic processes: in the past couple of years, there has been an increase in police brutality, "spy" trials initiated by security agencies, isolationism, anti-Western sentiments, attempts to restore monarchial symbols, growing government control over social life, etc.

This list goes on and on. Many of the people who had high hopes for

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Russia's future in the early 1990s, have changed their mind. They speak about the hopelessness of Russia as a socio-cultural "organism" burdened by a repressive, bureaucratic and anti-democratic heritage; a society with a traditional imperial structure that hinders modernization; the absence of a civic culture, etc. Although different, various pragmatic evaluations of this country boil down to one, originally proposed by Zbygniew Brzezinski: stop paying attention to Russia, since it is no longer the Soviet Union and does not present a real danger to the developed world: "fence" it off as the "black hole of civilization" and leave it alone. Prospects for long-term development turn out to be very limited: either the country remains as is, living off exports of raw materials, whose prices will inevitably increase because of their scarcity; or it will go through a slow, but inevitable disintegration into different zones according to the level of development and the seriousness of regional economic conflicts, i.e., the old USSR scenario.

Derived from efforts to "study the transition" from a "socialist" to a "capitalist" system, these ideas — including the formation of a more or less free market economy, representative democracy, pluralism, civil rights and freedoms — are reduced to a heavily abridged version of accelerated modernization ("Westernization") with a normative import (what to do and how to evaluate possible digressions from the general direction). This plan is like a train going from A to B, where both A and B are concealed, as is the movement of the train. The success of many long-term projects such as the Marshall Plan, the denazification of Germany, the work of the American military administration in Japan, etc. generate confidence in these undertakings. Undoubtedly, Western countries' support for changes in Central and Eastern Europe also plays an important role.

These reforms were possible only where there were real national elites able to elaborate new national programs, and institutions able to support these programs by providing guidelines for the reorientation of the country's cultural life and consumer behavior — as well as strong social movements modelled after their Western counterparts. Only in such cases can Western prescriptions promote political and economic rationalization. An important condition for reforming post-Soviet societies is mass support for change, even if predicated only on the rejection of the Soviet system. This kind of support facilitates the completion of the most difficult and painful phase of the reform, as it did in Poland, where *Solidarity* and the Church were precisely this kind of needed institutions. All of this is possible only in a few relatively small countries, which had been forced to become Moscow satellites against their will. Only in these

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cases it is possible to receive aid from European countries, and eventually join NATO and the European Union.

There is no model to explain the development of post-Soviet Russia. For this reason, it is essential to examine the most important events of Russia's recent history. It is during these times that one can see the mechanisms necessary for the system's organization and reproduction. The greatest stroke of luck during this decade has been the country's relative calm: the absence of catastrophic events likely to occur when a social system the size of the USSR falls apart. There has been no "revolution" followed by terror, and no civil war like the one that followed the fall of the empire in 1917-1921. Nor have there been any of the ethnic wars that have occurred in the former Soviet republics.[5] Measured by the number of victims, the destruction and the emigration it precipitated, neither the 1991-1992 Osetino-Ingushetian conflict, which took the lives of hundreds of people and caused thousands of others to flee from Northern Osetia to Ingushetia, nor the first Chechen war can be compared to the wars of Tadzhikistan or the Caucasus republics.[6] This means that, unlike in other republics of the former USSR that have been torn by various ethnic and ethno-national or religious conflicts, most of the Russian population (Russian or Russianized) was not involved in any ideological, political or social movements. From a Russian viewpoint, even the Chechen wars were organized and orderly, and did not require any mass support. This does not mean that during the last decade there were no serious political and social crises as a result of efforts to patch up the disintegrating totalitarian state.

Four Recent Crises

The first serious crisis, in October 1993, was triggered by the reconstituted Russian Communist Party's attempt to reassert itself in a sudden confrontation between the conservative Supreme Soviet (lower chapter of

5. The most significant of these conflicts were the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan for Nagorno-Karabakh (following a few coups in Azerbaijan); a few wars in Georgia (in Southern Osetia, in Abhazia, as well as the civil war, which culminated in the overthrow of President Gamsakhurdia), as a result of which the present Georgia government controls only about a third of its former territory; the TransDnestr riots in Moldavia; the four-year war in Tadzhikistan, which cost nearly 100,000 lives in a republic of 4-million people; the instability in the Kirgiz Republic; the danger of penetration of Islamic militants such as the Taliban from Tadzhikistan and Afghanistan, etc.

6. The four-year war in Nagorno-Karabakh displaced two million people (out of a population of 10 million in both republics). Compared to these regional conflicts, the Russian military actions in the Chechen republic take place in remote areas, whose population is about 0.5% of that of Russia as a whole.

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Parliament elected according to the electoral practices of the former Soviet Union) and Yeltsin's government, which had undertaken the privatization of state property as well as other socio-economic reforms. This conflict had been prefigured from the very beginning by the clash between new institutions and those inherited from the Soviet Union.

Unlike other Soviet republics, Russia did not have its own Russian power structure. That role was played by the executive power of the Soviet Union. Having acquired power unexpectedly after the dissolution of the USSR, the Supreme Soviet sought to hinder all political and socio-economic changes — changes that meant its abolition as a rudimentary Soviet institution. In the absence of a political culture facilitating compromises, it was impossible to negotiate and reach a compromise between legislative and executive power. Aware of the danger that this conflict could grow into a civil war, Yeltsin's regime had only one choice: deploy force. Only afterwards did it become possible to draft new rules and establish consensual relations between the center and regional elites.

The suppression of the revolt that had been plotted by the Supreme Soviet's supporters, and the arrest of its chief revealed the lack of any efficient political mechanisms, and the legal and political weakness of the new Russian power. This confrontation convinced the winners to strengthen the president's role, by granting the head of the state extremely broad powers, while limiting the controlling and legislative functions of the lower chamber of Parliament. This exposed an obvious political defect: the weakness of representative democracy and other branches of government. It was obvious that, in this case, juridical authorities would support strength, i.e., the president at the federal level and the governors at the regional level. The establishment of formal democracy in a rudimentary civil society, and the lack of mass socio-political movements inevitably reduces the quality of the representatives, increases the influence of conservative parties, while intensifying the general tendency toward great-power demagogy and populist appeals to the lowest strata of the population.

The crisis ended in December 1993 with the adoption of a new constitution and the planning of parliamentary elections. The main "democratic" parties, Yeltsin's former supporters, lost these elections, thus demonstrating the weakness of the new institutional structure and the absence of mass support for reforms. The decisive votes went to the communists and their supporters, and a new political actor appeared on the social scene — a protest electorate, personified by national-populist leaders such as Vladimir Zhirinovsky.

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Yeltsin carried out the unpopular and politically unrewarding work of liberalizing prices, resulting in considerable inflation that ate up the people's savings. Now there was an abundance of consumer goods, but practically no vital services. At that point, after stabilizing the country and the economy, and establishing control over the army, Yeltsin betrayed the small group of "young reformers" that initiated market reforms (Gaidar's 1991-1992 care-taker government) and turned to old Soviet cadres, enterprise directors, and managers of large industrial complexes. The period of *Sturm und Drang* came to an end, and the Russian power structure was solidified by partially reintroducing the old *nomenklatura*, i.e., the selection from above of those functionaries within the former Soviet *nomenklatura* that were personally loyal to Yeltsin.

This entourage was made up of informal groups and clients guarding Yeltsin's "flanks" by providing him with everything from informal financial and economic support to insuring his personal safety. There is an internal logic to the way political events develop in situations where the weakness of political institutions and of the intellectual elite, the underdevelopment of the party system, and the rudimentary status of civil society combine with the President and his entourage's desire to preserve the power they had gained almost through a miracle. Yeltsin was forced to rely exclusively on non-institutional structures — security forces, presidential guards, shady financial sources, friendly bankers, as well as on the unconstitutional status of the initially purely technical presidential administration (his chancellery). These groups soon turned into a second government, competing with the first. During those years, all sorts of hidden informal groups gained influence, from favorites such as Yeltsin's own personal bodyguard, Anatoli Korzhakov, or his personal banker, the adventurer Boris Berezovsky, loyal generals, ministers, entrepreneurs, personal advisers, etc. This entourage came to play an increasingly important role in political and economic matters. Soon, they managed to control the secret services, the police, internal security, the public prosecutor's office, even the army, as well as the main levers of economic power, including the allocation of export privileges, government credits, and bonuses. The Russian media dubbed them "the family," while the general public referred to it as "Yeltsin's mafia." This circle provided Yeltsin with the kind of financial support he needed for elections, and, in exchange, it received fantastic privileges for export-import operations, licenses, key appointments, privileges when it came to privatization, etc.

Because of the weakness of the legal, political, and constitutional

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mechanisms of government, Yeltsin was forced (for reasons of self-preservation) to agree to long-term plans for the decentralization of federal structures. His administration's appeal to regional leaders — the so-called contract for social harmony and division of power between the center and the federation's periphery — played an extremely important role in strengthening the new central power in its struggle against what remained of the Soviet *nomenklatura* and the old government system. What was at stake was not only loyalty to the new government, but also the amount of financial resources allocated to the regions. In exchange, the regional leaders received new legitimacy and the local courts greatly increased jurisdiction. The *nomenklatura* principle of appointment (from the center) of governors and other regional leaders was replaced by local elections — a move that immediately increased the influence of various shady groups and organizations controlling the financial and industrial resources of the various regions. In this case, political deals were made by granting regional authorities rights they had never had, such as increases in the discretionary funds provincial governors and presidents of former autonomous "republics" could carve out of their budgets, but also regulations concerning property rights, local taxes, etc. Under the Soviet regime, the regions were in charge of only 15-20% of tax revenues. The bulk was first sent to the center and subsequently reallocated to the regions. After 1994, the regions gradually changed all this through tax sabotage, extortion of permanent loans and subsidies, or blackmail, by declaring independence from the federal center (as happened in Tataria, Bashkiria or Jakutia). By 1999, the center received less than 45% of all tax revenues, with the strongest republic, Tataria, passing on to Moscow only 25% of the total.[7] In other words, during Yeltsin's presidency the character of central control over the regions changed: from rigidly administrative, it became budgetary and financial. This state of affairs practically eliminated the danger of ethno-regional separatism.

The *de facto* socio-political system was thus based on a combination of informal authoritarian state structures and a dynamic compromise of interests between the center and the regions, achieved by means of trade-offs with regional elites. The balance and stability of the political forces

7. Putin's main efforts in "strengthening state hierarchies" boiled down to a reestablishment of earlier relations with the provinces: by Spring 2001, he began to restore Soviet projects, allocating 65% and 75% of the republics' budget, depending on the level of regional economic developments. All of this reinforced a federal center, which was already beyond provincial control.

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were determined by the alliance between the presidential administration and the upper house of parliament (the Council of the Federation), constituted of regional leaders (governors and presidents of former autonomous republics) sometimes in full control in their regions and sometimes dependent on the managers of natural gas and oil monopolies or large industrial corporations ("Norilsknikel," "Sibirskii Alumini," etc.). This alliance could block or neutralize the populist or confrontational activities of the lower house of parliament.

In socio-political terms, these developments gradually increased the influence of provincial administrative groups, organizations, and lobbies. After the 1995 parliamentary elections, it also increased conservative pressure on the center and resulted in a considerable provincialization and primitivization of political life. Elections for the Russian parliament (the Duma and the Federal Council) brought to the center candidates from the provincial *nomenklatura*, either as members of the ruling party or as "independent candidates" with an outlook considerably more anti-reform and anti-liberal, more nationalistic and anti-Western. This state of affairs reflected the increasing political influence of "power brokers" — generals, security services, and the police — as well as a growing neo-traditionalism of the population, hurt and frustrated after the disintegration of the Soviet empire. Because of its ability to adapt to new conditions, the revitalized *nomenklatura* was able to suppress the weak democratic opposition, marginalize the independent news media, gain control of society (from ecological to legal organizations), and link administrative with financial and industrial structures. Simultaneously, after the first Chechen war, the political influence of the army and of secret services grew significantly. In other words, powerful provincial rulers still committed to Soviet ideas put an end to transformational impulses, using the new opportunities to turn existing administrative resources into economic capital.

The second crisis was precipitated by the 1996 presidential elections. To the extent that a communist victory could have posed a real danger of revenge, it involved the whole political spectrum. Its deeper implication, however, was the end of whatever legitimacy was left: any lingering trust in the new "liberal power" and the ideology of "reform from above." The crisis marked the exhaustion of the tactical anti-communist potential, which Yeltsin deployed to break with Gorbachev and the whole Soviet system. Six months before the election, polls indicated that Yeltsin had the support of only 4-5% of the voters (whereas his communist opponent had 24%). He managed to secure a second mandate only by using

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whatever administrative resources were at his disposal and promising to end the first Chechen war.

The result was a discrediting of reform ideologies and of reformist political parties, as well as the growth of isolationism and anti-Western sentiments. The large socio-economic crisis precipitated by the USSR's collapse (more than a 50% drop in production and a corresponding reduction in most of the population's real income) had not passed. A growing social stratification and widening gaps in living standards, especially in regions with different levels of economic development, resulted in depression, social envy, xenophobia, social aggression, and dissatisfaction with the inability to acquire the vast variety of hitherto unavailable products now filling retail outlets. By that time, these changes had become clearly visible. Previously privileged groups such as the scientific-technological elite employed in the military-industrial complex, highly skilled industrial workers, the state-dependent intelligentsia, doctors, teachers, professors, and even low level functionaries which had actively supported reforms and denounced the Soviet heritage, suddenly became the "new poor," generating a growing nostalgia for the good old days of the Soviet regime, support for strong power, nationalism, etc.

The third crisis, in August 1998, was precipitated by the collapse of the national currency. Its threefold decline in value in respect to the US dollar in a matter of a few days was at first seen as one of the consequences of the Asian economic crisis. More important, however, were internal factors, which weakened the immune system of the Russian economy against the impact of negative global developments. Given Russia's isolation in the global market, they caused even more weakness and instability. The reasons for these problems lie at the core of the Russian economy, i.e., its conservatism and its strong Soviet-style redistributive political interests. Aside from Gaidar's seemingly massive reforms (privatization, price liberalization, drastic reductions of government military purchases), the Russian economy did not undergo any structural changes. In general, it is an adaptive, allocating economy under weak and even criminal state control. The fusion of the interests of corrupt politicians, who lobbied for huge financial/industrial groups and state functionaries, resulted in systematically inflating the government budget, by increasing the privileges and entitlements of various interest groups. Most successful in this redistributive practice were deputies from the better organized communist parliamentary factions, who supervised and distributed state subsidies, justifying them in terms of concern for workers,

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national interests, national security, and social justice.[8] They insisted on maintaining artificial employment in unprofitable state enterprises, sustaining high prices for uncompetitive products, and subsidizing agricultural production in collective farms.

These practices were widespread: state budget outlays regularly exceeded state revenues by 12-14%, reaching sometimes 25-30% of the budget. This perpetuated the arbitrariness of federal and local officials, who determined the financing of different organizations or people according to their own corrupt interests. Thus, the country's growing debts and liabilities led to long delays (4-6 months on the average, in 1996-1998) in paying wages to workers, teachers, doctors, to the appearance of an unprecedented number of monetary substitutes, financial speculation, and a fall in tax revenues. The government kept taxes so high that entrepreneurs were forced to keep two sets of books to evade taxes (direct and indirect taxes in the Russia theoretically amount to about 75-90% of income, but few paid them), and export capital illegally. The failure to protect private ownership precipitated a flight of capital, a falling rate of investment, and rendered impossible any technological modernization without direct government participation.

The massive drop in output in the 1990s was related to the sharp downsizing of the military-industrial complex and related branches in heavy industry. The surviving enterprises sharply reduced production and employment, phased out the "social sphere" (the urban infrastructure in places where these companies dealt with urban planning, medical care, child care, etc.), and sought to find a niche in the international market by capitalizing on their low production costs. More than 75% of government revenues are now from tax collection on raw material exports (gas, metal, unfinished products, etc.). Despite lofty statistics concerning privatization (on paper, today more than 70% of all companies are private and independent of direct government control), the government still plays an extremely important economic role, because it has kept a controlling interest in leading industrial branches and extractive industries that allows it to regulate the price of energy, transport, gasoline, natural gas, etc.

The main state task is the collection and allocation of taxes from businesses and private individuals. Astronomical tax rates stifle any legal entrepreneurship and force managers to conceal a significant part of their profit. Although, to a lesser extent, the same is true for export branches of

8. See Lev Gudkov and Victor Zaslavsky, "I Paradossi della Democratizzazione," in *Lettera Internazionale*, No. 64 (2000).

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the economy, as a rule only the most powerful corporations can negotiate with the government about the amount of taxes or other forms of payments (direct cash payments, the repayment of foreign debt, etc.). Considering that the main industrial infrastructure is almost gone and in dire need of modernization (most industrial equipment is more than 25 years old), it is obvious why businesses and individuals avoid paying taxes. In fact, this hidden income has become a precondition for the functioning of the economy, and is the basis for the people's relatively stable existence. In other words, the general public sees opportunities for improving their standard of living only by resisting government policies. Naturally, this leads to the systematic reproduction of a network of informal connections. As foreign observers have noted, this often degenerates into the kind of total corruption that has characterized Russia since the collapse of the Soviet system. This could be seen as a continuation of the Soviet "shadow" or deficit economy, which used to compensate for the inflexibility of planned management. Corruption made possible a smooth institutional interaction: it was a social mechanism that buffered the planned rigor of relations and without which the system could not have existed. Yet, post-Soviet corruption is only an epiphenomenon of the re-emergence of the former silent "bureaucratic or administrative" market or "shadow economy" as a result of excessive state participation in the economy.

The 1994-1997 years in Russia can be seen as a period of great adventures, financial pyramids, arranged privatization auctions, but most of all multiple speculations with treasury bonds, treasury bills, and state and federal liabilities. This was a time when wealth was accumulated almost overnight from "nothing," thanks to special relations with the administration and inside knowledge of budget allocations. Of course, in the end the general public had to pay for it. Inflation and delays in paying salaries were tools for keeping consumer standards at constantly low levels, which helped preserve the system as a whole. The communists and other conservative forces argued that the population was unable to withstand further declines in standards of living, and sought the ending of market reforms and the privatization of the state sector. The government in turn perpetuated subsidies to key industries and large corporations to protect employment and prevent social unrest.

In such a situation, regardless of its ideological bent, each successive government (Chernomyrdin's, Kirienko's, Primakov's, Stepashin's, and Kasianov's), was forced to patch up the collapsing economy, postponing reforms indefinitely. The budget grew, but only because of raw material

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exports and taxation, while industrial stagnation and a decline in labor productivity ruled out any significant reform in housing (still purely socialist), the heavily subsidized health care system, education and science.

A government policy focused on immediate economic problems cannot last indefinitely, since sooner or later systemic crises break out, calling for immediate responses. In fact, there were a variety of different crises — industrial catastrophes precipitated by aging equipment, the collapse of the social infrastructure (e.g., inability to provide heating for the population, or coping with energy shortages, financial crises), etc. Regardless of ideological and political interests, as a rule, what forced Russia's political elite to undertake further political and economic reforms had nothing to do with any reform policy, but was usually triggered by these critical situations. This was the case with the new laws enacted after the 1998 financial crisis, and why Putin is pressed to act in foreign policy.

The consequences of this crisis, which involved banking and credit, were contradictory. On the one hand, it forced numerous entrepreneurs and farmers into bankruptcy, thus paralyzing private services and the consumer goods sector. On the other, it devaluated the ruble significantly, bankrupted importing firms, and forced imports out of the Russian market. This encouraged the development of Russian production, a significant economic revival, a reduction in unemployment and a repayment of unpaid wages, whose real value, however, had declined in the meantime to about 60% of the original.

Although the negative economic consequences of this crisis were soon overcome, it completely destroyed confidence in the market economy, the ideology of reforms, and the government reform policy. The standard of living for most people fell to 60-70% of the 1997 level. Disappointment with reforms spread to all groups — even to those whose interests up to then had been tied to Western countries, modernization, and democracy. These were people who saw themselves as Russia's future "middle class," modeled after borrowed examples, life styles, and ideas of a "normal society." Democracy and reforms acquired negative connotations even for those who blamed Yeltsin and the "oligarchs" (corrupt democrats who were "selling off the country to the West"); whereas positive developments were attributed to anti-reform governments, first Primakov's (who was soon forgotten), and then Putin's.

Public opinion studies indicated widespread disappointment with practically all socio-political institutions: parliament, the government, the judicial system, the army, the police, political parties, the unions, etc.

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Some confidence remained mainly for some of the most rudimentary and archaic institutions unrelated to modernity or even the West: the army, to a lesser degree, the secret services, and the church (as a bearer of supreme ideals). The latter had been persecuted under the Soviet regime, while remaining a substitute for the ethnic community of "all orthodox Russians." Those institutions meant to ensure social stability — the courts, the public prosecutor's office, the police, labor unions, etc. — were regarded as beyond redemption. The excessive confidence in the current president compensates for the mistrust in these institutions and politicians: it is entirely the result of negative impulses, such as the denial of chaos in social life, the farce in politics, the bloody war in Chechnya, and the absence of any substantive positive programs. Talk of social change, reforms, democratization, and Westernization has all but disappeared from the elite's official jargon. Today, no one in power would describe itself in these terms and tie its fate to such programs.

The fourth crisis is related to the second Chechen war in the fall of 1999, and the ensuing change in the political regime. Escalating tensions within the country could be seen in the sharp, although not long-lasting, anti-American reactions to NATO's bombings in Serbia, the general intensification of isolationist anti-Western sentiments, and nostalgia for the old Soviet days. Triggering the new war in Chechnya were the Chechen military attack on neighboring Dagestan (a republic with a substantial Chechen minority), and a series of terrorist incidents in Russian cities, such as the explosions in Moscow that resulted in more than 300 people killed and as many injured. Up to now, no one has taken responsibility for these attacks, and the aim of these incidents remains unclear. According to some Chechen leaders, the raid on Dagestan was the first step in creating of a united Islamic republic in the Caucasus. More realistically, it was a demonstration of power and readiness to act on the part of Chechen field commanders in order to inflate their reputation and influence. It is also likely that the Russian secret services were aware of the Chechen plans, but failed to prevent them.

Whoever the culprits may have been, these events intensified fear, the desire for revenge, and hatred of Chechens. Russian authorities suffered a further loss of public support as a result of their inability to improve the standards of living, to guarantee order and stability, or even to protect the population from terrorist attacks. A few weeks of negative mobilization and military preparations revived old social reflexes and stereotypes among Russians raised in the Soviet atmosphere of "life in a besieged

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fortress." In an amazingly short period of time — only two months — there were major political changes: a new head of government was appointed, who almost immediately turned into a new national leader, the country's savior.

The figure to which public opinion attributed all sorts of abilities and qualities, who allegedly had a "strong arm" and could readily restore order in the country, was Vladimir Putin, who up to then had been the head of the secret services — an agency that had not changed throughout the years of "democratic reforms," had fallen from public view, and was just resurfacing. Almost immediately, there was a reimposition of censorship in the media, first only by restricting information about military actions in Chechnya, later by expanding to other areas, and subsequently even to major publications. Exemplary lawsuits were initiated against dissenting media concerns and publications (with the "Mediamost" bankruptcy case attracting most attention), followed by the closing of private television and radio stations, newspapers, and magazines. In so doing, the government reestablished control over most popular publications and TV channels — and thus over public opinion.

At that point, the army, the Ministry of the Interior, the public prosecutor's office, and the Federal Security Service became the most important social institutions. The outlook of the top military and security services' leaders, the "power elite" in the broadest sense of the term, became, if not a model, at least very respectable and popular. Strategically, this outlook reproduces strong state values and Soviet symbols, while psychologically and emotionally it exploits the grief of those who lost relatives killed in Chechnya.

The use of mobilization to generate support for the system is not unusual: it was an integral part of the political culture of the old totalitarian society. The following three factors prompted a recourse to negative mobilization. First, when the social system's internal differentiation and growing complexity reached such a level that the government felt it was losing control over events. Second, orderly change clashed with the interests of various influential groups, who therefore proceeded to block it. Third, the degradation of the professional elite resulted in its inability to be anything but subordinate to the bureaucracy. The government tries to compensate for the lack of positive programs and political will by mobilizing the population against conservatives, communist revenge, NATO, or Islamic extremism. Each time, these mobilizations presupposed the personal support of the country's new

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leader in opposition to the old and discredited one. The result has been not just new institutional forms, but the constitution of a unique, disoriented mass, which generates pseudo-charismatic leaders able to exploit not only hopes for change, but nostalgia for the past. Yet, none of them — not Gorbachev, not Yeltsin, or even less Putin — has been able to set new goals and directions for development.

The Chechen war is an attempt to consolidate mass support for the central authority, to avoid the dismantling of the repressive state, and to guarantee a popular consensus in Russian society. The Chechen war is an "artificial" problem in the sense that it was created by sclerotic power structures (the army, the secret services, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry for Nationality Affairs, the Security Council, and others) in response to the rulers' growing political incompetence. It would not have become a national problem if these structures had not been able to present this local conflict as a danger to the state as a whole, i.e., to raise technical political problems to a symbolic level.

Thus, the real reasons for the Chechen wars are to be found in Moscow, not in Chechnya. This type of political action and reaction is typical for the political elite at the present stage of post-totalitarian disintegration. One problem is solved by creating another, larger problem, whereby the first one "disappears" behind the second. This metamorphosis provides low-level authorities operating within those conservative institutions weakened by the post-Soviet transition with ready access to previously unavailable opportunities to justify their own existence. During the four years of war, Russian generals, who had failed in all of their military operations in the past thirty years, gained the kind of political influence they never had. This could have happened only in a context in which, confronted with complex problems the political elite lacks such cultural resources as patience, competence, rationality, tact, and understanding.

This is the logic of the post-Soviet disintegration of the system. It forces political leaders, parties, social groups or institutional sub-systems to look for simpler and seemingly more effective traditional solutions, woven in the sphere of ethnic relations. This can be characterized as a process of relative social regression and "primitivization" in that it recycles earlier models of conflict-resolution, typical of pre-industrial and authoritarian states. A similar logic of social regression obtains on both sides of the conflict, which only makes it all the more impossible to solve, and dooms all parties to wage war until resources are exhausted, and the situation reaches a dead end.

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Regulated Democracy

The post-Soviet political system is not predicated on any institutional balance of socio-political forces or political parties. The mechanisms governing the formation of political organizations in Russia are different from anywhere else. The birth of the multi-party system is linked to the dissolution of the totalitarian "party-state," the state's disengagement from the Communist Party, and statist rule. Some parties were first formed locally, within particular republics, and then expanded into political blocks to the entire Soviet Union. Later, after the fall of the ruling Communist Party, other factions of the *nomenklatura* organized themselves as Russian Social-democrats, National Patriots, National Populists, etc.

Up to the 1995 elections, when reformers were defeated once and for all, many political strategies were being proposed for Russia's development. They ranged from various plans to Westernize the country to the preservation of the socialist system with no market economy or private ownership — even of small and midsize firms. But by the 1996 presidential elections, the choice had narrowed down to Yeltsin's plan to preserve the new state of affairs and Zyuganov's proposal to restore, at least partially, the Soviet system. By 1996, it became clear that it was impossible to completely marginalize the supporters of the totalitarian system or to allow defenders of Western liberalism to have their way. The only alternative was to build on the foundation of the Soviet state apparatus. This narrowing of political programs was a healthy development. No one denounced the market economy any more, since the major and most dramatic phase of privatization had already been carried out (after the juridical recognition of property rights, established by Soviet managers and directors in the last years of Soviet Union's existence), nor did anyone seek to complete the reforms.

In the 1999 parliamentary campaign, which took place in an atmosphere of negative social solidarity, ideological differences among voters were almost negligible: ordinary people called for more emphasis on social welfare, the communists sought more "protection for domestic producers," and the Right insisted on minor expansions of the free market. Independently of ideological pronouncements, success in party politics was determined by only one thing: the degree to which one rallied around Putin as the country's new leader. The incredible increase in Putin's popularity rating (from 2% in September to 70% in November) can be explained only in terms of another upsurge of mass hopes and illusions, rather than by the leader's real actions. Everyone saw in Putin what they

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wanted to see: the "democrats," a reformer; the communists, someone seeking to restore the USSR's power — a leader willing to introduce the old anthem and glorify Stalin. Putin came to represent the "centrists,"[9] the majority, the masses, their values and beliefs. From then on, no success or failure could alter his reputation.

For most voters, the political map before the latest elections (December 2000) was as follows: a bipolar "center" (with the communists somewhat on the Left, and the party of the government — "the unity party" — somewhat on the Right), trailed by a collection of former rival candidates. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation that in the first half of the 1990s, up to the 1996 presidential elections, played the role of the "Left" opposition moved to the center. Its role as an opposition from the left was taken over by an assorted group of Bolshevik and nationalist radicals — the Stalinist block "Communists, Russian Workers for the Soviet Union," the nationalist "Movement in Defense of the Army," and the quasi-Nazi "Russian National Unity" party.

Putin's phenomenal support was of a similar nature: he had no definite political program, and most of the population understood this (only 18% of those interviewed thought he had some definite program). Putin's image as a true leader was much more important than empty promises and programs. In this respect, Putin's image is a mechanism for transforming an amorphous popular dissatisfaction into "positive" social solidarity. Russians seeking to regain self-respect longed for a strong leader able to put an end to chaos, differences of opinion, and inter-group conflicts — someone who promises to silence "enemies" and evil-doers, and to shape, structure, and direct social development. The goals are rhetorically defined as the war on poverty, crime, corruption and a new emphasis on positive, government-backed, social norms.

In a nutshell, Putin represents the kind of pseudo-leader who personifies the masses' expectations of good government. He does not introduce new ideas, does not elaborate new goals (which would mean attracting new groups with their own interests), but rather combines the slogans and programs of others, while simultaneously reducing them to banal tautological appeals. Such unity is possible only when a populist leader acts on behalf of the "majority" and identifies with the masses, so that particular

9. As a political platform, "centrism" is not simply an eclectic combination of different party programs, but also a conservative program of a decentralized bureaucracy that tried to combine its control over the formerly state property and the budget with elements of a market economy.

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groups, organizations, corporations, and individuals are reduced to unimportant, egoistic concerns. This marginalization of the value of private groups is expressed by the maxim: "The majority is always right." The general mechanism for creating unity here is practically the same as in the case of voting. Even parliamentary parties with liberal-democratic and market proclivities (e.g., the Union of the Right Forces — the active part of the pro-Putin alliance "Unity") do not simply give up their former positions opposition to executive power, anti-militarism) and agree to be "like everybody else." They do so hoping to achieve their own economic and political objectives and to gain some key positions in the government.

The paradox here is that, after achieving unity and authority, the new president began reconstructing the main feature of the Soviet system: increased direct government control over key spheres of social life. The *modus operandi* of the new presidential team is as follows: in order to build a new power base and strengthen control over regional governors, the country has been divided into several huge territorial districts supervised by the president's representatives (usually former army and secret service generals). Having silenced some recalcitrant TV stations and journals, the president's office has achieved a considerable degree of control over the mass media. Finally, the party system has been rearranged according to the new law concerning political parties that regulates both the number of parties and their political orientation.

Thus, the parties do not compete for better representation of voters — something that would require elaborating different programs and articulating group interests — but rather for the role of the pro-government party allowed to use the state's administrative resource. The multiparty system that emerged after the Soviet collapse is now being replaced by one much simpler of the "party-in-power" and a few competitors interested in acquiring the same pro-government status. By controlling the party system and the outcome of elections, the executive controls parliament and can force it to ratify whatever it deems necessary.

Conclusion

Unlike in Eastern and Central Europe, the disintegration of Soviet institutions has not been compensated by the appearance of groups and movements able to develop new forms of civil society. Soviet society was a closed system relatively stable and successful only as long as it remained isolated from the outside world. For generations, the party-state succeeded in creating and perpetuating the atmosphere of a besieged fortress.

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Appeals to the population's patience, asceticism, and obedience to the ruling party maintained a state of readiness for individual sacrifice. This worked, despite the fact that this official rhetoric was counterbalanced by shoddy work, general deceit, black humor, political jokes and corrosive envy of those who, thanks to their favorable position in the state-created system of stratification or through personal initiative, could afford a standard of living way above the average level of poverty. This was the basis of Soviet double thought, but did not change the nature of social integration in the totalitarian state.

Yet, it was impossible to maintain this level of relative primitivism over time: the regime could mobilize society, but could not reproduce itself. Tensions created by poverty and an undifferentiated social system had a generational character. Young people wanted to live better lives than their parents, and this precipitated an erosion of ideological control. Moreover, the USSR's isolation could not be absolute, given the logic of bipolarity. Modern society requires a stream of information, and its cultural and social components subverted the intellectual elite, which became increasingly a purely reproductive and allocating bureaucracy.

The disintegration of the totalitarian system did not depend on any new consciousness or values, any new socio-cultural Russian qualities which might have promoted "democracy" and generated claims for different personal rights or freedoms. It was precipitated by the utter impossibility to maintain the degree of isolation necessary for the system's reproduction — in particular, for the reproduction of the old Soviet relations of dependence between rulers and the ruled.

The disintegration of the communist system is not the same as the establishment of democracy. Bombastic declarations about the end of the dictatorship of the Communist party and the KGB, about the great future of a free and democratic Russia, have not shattered the system of internal repression typical of the various levels of the still functioning institutional system of the multilevel Soviet framework.

Thus, the fall of the Soviet system did not mean the total elimination, not even a significant transformation of the totalitarian institutional framework. The disintegration of institutions on one level did not have any impact on the structure of those on other levels. Social institutions lead "their own lives" and have so much internal stability that they are strong enough to survive even the most serious systemic crises. Moreover, particular institutions can take on functions different from their original ones, and can compensate for disruptions or facilitate adaptation to changes.

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The most stable and conservative components of the totalitarian regime are the people themselves, i.e., the personality structure built during decades of Soviet power. The point here has nothing to do with the rigidity of established ideological views, nor with a sort of traditionalist matrix of semi-magic beliefs, but rather with the complex, contradictory, and dynamic structure of values and socio-psychological mechanisms that lead to adapting to various forms of institutional violence and buffering the impact of those value and social factors that at first glance seem incompatible. The socio-anthropological type created by late Soviet conditions might best be described as that of a "cunning slave," all of whose thoughts are directed to survival in adverse conditions. The degree of creativity and psychological malleability might be very high, but up to now there have been no efforts to change this state of affairs, first and foremost, the institutional framework of life. "A society in transition" may be not a society undergoing transition, but rather one suspended in a static existence.

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Immigration, Insecurity and the French Far Right

Frank Adler

Fear of crime has been associated with immigration in French public opinion for at least the past twenty years. Conventional political wisdom would point to the central role played by France's extreme right party, the Front National (FN), in successfully linking the two issues and maintaining their centrality in national political debates. Indeed, for most of this period, other political parties found themselves caught waffling between two poles; appearing before a preoccupied public to be too soft on immigration and insecurity, leaving themselves vulnerable to FN attacks of laxism or worse, and contributing themselves to the FN's xenophobic discourse by taking stands which provoked the wrath of influential anti-racist organizations and a significant segment of public opinion, of carrying water to the FN's mill.

Yet, in the face of this conventional view, a transition has begun to take place during the past two years which has gone relatively unnoticed. While insecurity has clearly gotten worse and undoubtedly will be a major concern in the coming presidential and parliamentary elections, immigration has almost faded from the national political arena as a hot-button issue. One might tentatively say that it has been eclipsed by other issues (insecurity, corruption, Corsica, an economic downturn and renewed unemployment), or that it has entered a period of conspicuous latency. Beyond the extreme right, it was not even mentioned during the recent municipal elections, nor have any of the major parties given any indication that it will appear in next year's electoral campaigns. The left will further delay fulfilling its promise of extending the right to vote in municipal elections to non-EC residents, the right will not again tinker with citizenship or the nationality code, much less promise any new program of expulsions or subsidizing the

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repatriation of foreigners. If anything, the right seems to have retreated from its standard commitment to get tough on immigration, perhaps no longer fearing it will lose part of its electorate to the FN. Charles Pasqua, a Gaullist hard-liner on immigration and former Interior Minister whose very name is associated with restrictive legislation, claimed that Interior Minister Chevènement had not been sufficiently generous in the last round of "regularizing" immigrants of irregular status, that an "électrochoc" was called for whereby all who applied, not guilty of criminal infractions, should be approved. In fact, some leaders of the right, Alain Juppé for one, have called for a fundamental reappraisal of the immigration issue, noting, in passing, that there is now a sizable number of second and third generation voters from immigrant constituencies who have become French citizens and who support the left because the right has either written them off or has never really addressed their concerns.[1]

What led to the eclipse of immigration as a political issue and its de-coupling from insecurity? Why has the current highly publicized crime wave[2]

1. See "Analyse sur l'immigration," a study issued by Juppé's think tank France Moderne on their website, www.france.moderne.asso.fr. During the municipal election campaigns, a ship, the *East Sea*, ran aground off Saint-Raphaël, carrying nine hundred Kurdish refugees seeking asylum. Despite the fact that the press pointed out that there is the equivalent of one *East Sea* every ten days in France, and despite the fact that the Kurds were really from Syria and not from Iraq where they claimed they had been persecuted, eight of ten French respondents polled were in favor of welcoming them. Despite the ongoing problem of illegal immigration, and despite warnings from the extreme right that more and more of such third world cargo would find itself on French shores, neither the *East Sea* nor the broader issue of refugee smuggling even surfaced during the municipal elections. See *Le Monde* (Feb. 21, 2001); and *Le Parisien* (Feb. 22, 2001).

2. The French press throughout Spring and Summer of 2001 was filled with reports of violence in schools and on public transportation that generated strikes calling for more security. This, and gang violence in fashionable places like La Défense, resort areas, and central Paris added fuel to an ongoing concern about the spread of more and more *zones de non-droit*, outside housing projects in the *banlieues* and *quartiers sensibles*. More and more crime involved violence and the threat of violence, whether in extorting money from victims using cash machines, stealing cellular phones or luridly reported gang rapes. During the first semester of 2001, the crime rate shot up 9.58% (*Le Figaro*, June 18, 2001). On June 18th, *Le Figaro* printed a comparative study bearing the lead "La France plus criminogène que les Etats-Unis." It indicated not only that while crime generally was declining in the US, it was rising in France; more significantly, France now had more robberies and crimes with violence per 100,000 inhabitants. On July 4th *Le Figaro* reported that one in four people residing in the region of Ile-de-France had been a crime victim. *Le Monde* and *Libération*, always more reticent in covering crime, ran similar stories. On August 10th, *Le Monde* ran a number of articles on violent crimes committed against tourists, including one citing warnings which appeared in the foreign press. *Libération* ran an editorial, "Les bonnes intentions," claiming the left would pay dearly in the coming elections if crime statistics continue to worsen, that good intentions were not enough.

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and attendant concerns for security not led to a renewed round of anti-immigrant sentiment, especially considering earlier polling data where respondents consistently held immigration partially responsible for insecurity in the range of 50 to 65%, and recent polls where 60% of respondents continue to agree with the proposition that there are too many immigrants in France?[3]

An adequate explanation, of course, would be complex. It mayt have ben related, however, to the internally-generated, self-destructive crisis of the FN in December 1998 and the formation of a splinter party in January 1999 — the Mouvement National Républicain (MNR), headed by Bruno Mégret. Simply put, to the degree that the saliency of immigration was associated with the ascendancy and implantation of the FN from 1984 to 1998, so too is the decline of immigration as an issue associated with the precipitous decline, isolation and marginalization of the parties of the far right. Since 1999, Le Pen and Mégret are rarely seen on television, nor are they covered in the press as they had been before. While they retained control in three of the four municipalities they held before the recent elections (Orange, Marignane, Vitrolles), they lost Toulon and literally disappeared in Dreux, their most famous local stronghold. Despite some areas of local and regional strength, their national presence has diminished. Instead of getting 15% of the vote, as they did in elections before the rupture, they now share roughly 10% nationally. Support for Le Pen's ideas has dropped by half in recent polls, while opposition toward forming electoral alliances with either the FN or MNR has increased both among the general electorate, as well as supporters of those moderate right parties (RPR, UDF, RPF, DL) with whom agreements might have been forged to defeat the left in triangular contests. Opposition to forming alliances with the FN is 71% among all respondents, and 62% among supporters of the moderate right parties; opposition, ironically enough, is even greater *vis-à-vis* alliances with the party headed by Mégret, perceived earlier as more moderate than Le Pen and champion of an "Italian strategy" of alliance formation: 72% among all respondents, and 66% among supporters of the moderate right parties.[4] Given the increased isolation and marginality of the far right parties, the issues, constituencies and electorate they had previously

3. See Yvan Gastaut, *L'immigration et l'opinion en France sous la V^e^ République* (Paris: Seuil, 2000), p. 486; and Le Monde-RTL poll conducted in May 2000 by Sofres for the latest data on the perennial question on whether there are too many immigrants..

4. See Le Monde-RTL poll conducted in May 2000 by Sofres. See also, Gérard Le Gall, "Le Front national à l'épreuve du temps," in the Sofres volume *L'état de l'opinion 1998* (Paris: Seuil, 1998), pp. 49-83.

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commanded are no longer as politically significant as before; in fact, they can now be largely ignored by major parties at little or no apparent cost.

An alternative, or rather complimentary, explanation might focus not so much on the FN, but rather on the long-term evolution of public opinion which has grown less hostile toward immigration or at least has become resigned to accepting the permanent presence of large numbers of non-European residents whose children will become French nationals or already are (the so-called *jeunes issus de l'immigration*).[5] On this account, there is progressively less support for the far right's proposals on immigration, especially the coerced repatriation of long-standing foreign residents and revoking the status of those naturalized since 1974 — a policy never seriously considered since Vichy. Accordingly, support for the far right's position on immigration would likely decline even had there been no crisis debilitating the FN, because the far right's marginalization is largely the consequence, rather than the cause, of a shift in public opinion regarding immigration. There is much to be said for this explanation which decenters the FN and places public opinion on immigration in a broader historical and cultural context.[6] Though the FN's speculation on immigration was

5. As far as the French were concerned, North African workers were simply meeting short-term manpower needs when they began to appear in greater numbers during the 1950s. These *travailleurs immigrés*, as they were called, initially were brought to France under rotation agreements which called for repatriation at the expiration of a fixed period, usually three years. No one ever imagined that they might remain in France in great numbers and, through family reunification allowances, bring entire families, leading eventually to a large presence. None other than President De Gaulle would say in 1959 that the French were "above all a European people of the white race, of Greek and Latin culture, and of the Christian religion." Today such a statement would run the risk of violating anti-racism statutes and would be uttered only by politicians of the far right, certainly not the mainstream. The General added, "It is fine that there are yellow French, black French, and brown French. This shows that France is open to all races and that it has a universal vocation. But on the condition that these remain a small minority. Otherwise, France would no longer be France." Regarding Arabs, De Gaulle was more demonstrative. "Try to mix oil and vinegar. Shake the bottle and after a while they will separate anew. Arabs are Arabs, the French are French. Do you believe that the French body can absorb ten million muslims, who tomorrow will be twenty million, and the day after tomorrow forty million? . . . . My village would no longer be called Colombey-les-Deux Églises, but Colombey-les-Deux Mosquées!" See Alain Peyrefitte, *C'était de Gaulle*, Vol. I (Paris: Fayard, 1995), p. 52. An indication of the degree to which public opinion has changed may be seen from responses to the question whether immigrants should be exhorted to repatriate. In 1977, after the economic downturn had set in and immigration had been suspended, 77% responded affirmatively. By 1993, only 18% agreed, while 76% disagreed. See Gastaut, *op. cit.*, pp. 325-327.

6. See Gastaut, *op. cit.*

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central to its ascendancy in 1984, immigration already had been an issue which pitted the left against restrictive policies enacted under Giscard d'Estaing's presidency by Poniatowski, Stoleru, Bonnet and Barre. One might even argue that it was the left's victory in 1981 that created the generalized conditions (not just immigration) for Le Pen's ascendancy. After all, the FN had been playing the immigration card without success since its formation in 1972. It hardly discovered the issue in the 1980s.

While an adequate explanation would combine both approaches, rather than pursuing one to the exclusion of the other, the following will focus on the crisis and marginalization of the FN. This was not a slow, gradual decline that can be explained by external factors, but rather a dramatic crash. In fact, *never had the FN been more influential than it was immediately prior to the crisis*, never had it been as well implanted locally and nationally, never had it been closer to persuading elements of the moderate right parties to afford it the same consideration on the right that the socialists afforded the communists on the left, never had it been closer to escaping from its political ghetto. Neither the marginalization of the FN, nor the eclipse of the immigration issue would have taken place had it not been for the crisis, despite evolutionary changes in public opinion and symbolically significant events such as the understandably overplayed "*effet coupe du monde*," when France was victorious with a multiracial team joyously embraced by immigrants and French alike, everyone except the far right, especially Le Pen.

The Crisis

In the development of the Front National from an obscure extreme-right *groupuscule* to a national political party, three distinct phases can be identified. The crisis emerged from internal contradictions that could no longer be contained during the third phase, when the FN was torn between two fundamentally different and incompatible strategies, articulated alternatively by Jean-Marie Le Pen and Bruno Mégret. The first was that of a so-called *grande alternative* where the FN would attempt to confront and destabilize the entire "rotten" establishment, and especially the dominant political parties, the so-called "gang of four." As things became progressively worse, French voters would eventually turn to them, the only political force that addresses real issues (immigration, crime, unemployment), that has not failed, and that was not corrupt. The second, sometimes called the "Italian strategy," was derived theoretically from Gramsci and was partially modeled on Gianfranco Fini's transformation of the neo-fascist

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MSI into the post-fascist Alleanza Nazionale, de-diabolizing the party's negative identity, and breaking out of its political ghetto through an alliance strategy with other parties of the center-right. Basically, the conflict between Le Pen and Mégret is over strategy, not doctrine; means, not ends. Though Mégret has differed with some of Le Pen's foreign policy views, and has little patience with what he regards as Le Pen's counterproductive statements on racial inequality, Jews, the Holocaust, Vichy and the old reactionary right, his general outlook on immigration, French identity, Islam, crime, US power and globalization are almost identical to Le Pen's. Having himself synthesized the quite disparate and occasionally contradictory pronouncements Le Pen has made on such issues into a formally articulated, coherent party program, Mégret renounced nothing in the FN's program when he founded the MNR, but instead carried these programmatic commitments whole-cloth into the new party.

In order to situate the dispute between Le Pen and Mégret, the following three-stage periodization may be useful. The first stage (1972-84) corresponds to what FN members sometimes refer to as "crossing the desert." These were difficult years, laboring in almost total obscurity, with no electoral success and no political profile. The typical party member came from either the old reactionary right (including those who had served Vichy and the Waffen-SS), or newer far right formations such as Occident, Ordre nouveau, FEN, Mouvement Solidariste, OAS, as well as those who had supported the campaigns of Pierre Poujade and Jean-Louis Tixier-Vignancoeur. Despite defections, internal disputes, and little material support, the singular accomplishment during this stage was aggregating the various far right factions into one unified, durable organization. Le Pen's leadership, at first subject to challenge, gradually asserted itself and with time became incontestable; his capacity to mediate between opposing currents and incomparable charisma laid the basis for a *culte du chef* through which the party became viewed as his personal instrument, an extension of his persona. Important decisions were made by him alone, not debated in the party's deliberative bodies.

The second stage (1984-1997) covers the ascendance and implantation of the FN in national politics. Beginning with Jean-Pierre Stirbois' electoral breakthrough in Dreux at the end of 1983, and Le Pen's score of 11% in the European elections of 1984, the FN began to gain attention and new members. In the hope of securing material support and greater respectability, Le Pen recruited notables from the world of business, academia, and the parliamentary right; in the hope of gaining organizational

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and political expertise, he recruited a younger group of talented, well-educated "new rightists," Mégret's entourage, who began their careers in the parliamentary right, but became disaffected after it became clear that no fundamental reform or reconstitution would follow in the wake of the left's 1981 victory. Party membership was no longer confined to those from the classical far right; the social composition of the party became broader and more diverse. There were conflicts and defections; for example some important notables (Blanchot, Arrighi, Frédérick-Dupont, d'Ormesson) left when Le Pen refused to retract or give apologies for gratuitously embarrassing anti-Semitic remarks. Mégret's group was afforded a tremendous degree of autonomy in generating new organizational structures, training younger party leaders, and articulating the party's program. Mégret was appointed *délégué général* in 1988, as well as director of Le Pen's presidential campaign, in part as a way of marginalizing the party's general secretary, Jean-Pierre Stirbois who Le Pen feared was becoming too powerful.

By 1997, the party had not only established for itself an enduring presence in national elections, something no other extreme right party had even done in France, it had won municipal elections in Toulon, Orange, Marignane and Vitrolles. In fact, never had the FN been in a stronger position to determine the outcome of triangular political races where its support would be necessary to defeat the left; never had there been so much pressure amassing within the moderate right parties to reach some electoral agreements with the FN, despite opposition from top party leadership. On May 26, 1997, in the wake of the regional elections where the FN's damage to the moderate right had been striking, Alain Peyrefitte, a preeminent Gaullist elder statesman, hinted in *Le Figaro* that while no alliances between the parliamentary right and an FN headed by Le Pen would be acceptable, a FN headed by Mégret would receive serious consideration. Mégret had proven himself far more threatening to Le Pen than Stirbois was earlier; in public discourse as well as within party circles effective leadership was shifting toward Mégret who more than Le Pen actually managed the party apparatus and organized national and local elections. Already at the party's Tenth Congress, held in Strasbourg in March 1997, Mégret and his associates convincingly dominated election to the central committee, besting Bruno Gollnisch and others conspicuously tied to Le Pen. Repeatedly, his presence was greeted with cheers of "Vitrolles, Vitrolles, Vitrolles," in recognition of his wife's electoral victory in a contest that attracted national attention. The question

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of succession was openly posed in the media. To forestall this at all cost, Le Pen engineered a purge or *démégrétisation* of the party.

The third stage (1997 to the present) brought to an end the peaceful coexistence between the Le Pen and Mégret camps that had lasted fifteen years. Through an alliance strategy, where the FN would play a leading role in the recomposition of the right, Mégret believed the party could finally address the fundamental question of governing. This entailed giving the party a new, more responsible and more respectable public face, untarnished by Le Pen's anti-Semitism and outrageous personal conduct (e.g., during a particularly sensitive period, the interval between the two rounds of the 1997 parliamentary election, Le Pen assaulted a female socialist candidate, Annette Peulvast-Bergeal, who was running against his daughter; a day earlier he presented on a plate to Marie-France Stirbois, in front of an audience of three thousand followers, a replica of the severed head of the socialist mayor of Strasbourg, Catherine Trautman). For Mégret, and many in the party outside his group, Le Pen had become an obstacle to the FN's further development; he had outlived his usefulness. Le Pen reacted by calling on Jean-Claude Martinez to lead the assault against Mégret. Martinez was asked to create a so-called *pré-gouvernement*, modeled on the British shadow government, which he packed with Mégret opponents, and to direct the party's campaign in the coming European elections — a responsibility in the past always assumed by Mégret. At the same time, Mégret's staff and collaborators were threatened with exclusion. The conflict broke out into the open during the course of a December 5, 1998 meeting of the *conseil national* which Le Pen was forced to finally suspend after persistent interruptions and heckling by Mégret supporters. This led to the circulation of a petition for a special congress to resolve the dispute which, in effect, ended up as the founding congress of a new party in Marignane on January 23, 1998. Toward the end of the congress Mégret, at a cocktail party for journalists, said a cohabitation of two parties with the same program on the same terrain could only be provisional; one would quickly triumph over the other and eliminate it. In fact, during the subsequent European election, the two parties battled each other more than their traditional adversaries with much spilling of blood and airing of dirty laundry. Whereas before the split the FN was expected to receive 15% of the vote, the two parties ended up sharing 10% (roughly 6% for Le Pen and 3% for Mégret). If anything, the ghetto of 15% has grown smaller and more isolated. There has been no further talk of compromise and reconciliation. FN leadership

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does not expect the MNR to survive past the 2002 elections; without a minimum of 5% of the vote, they surmise, it will not receive State funding and it will not be able to convince supporters to cover the party's debts yet again. MNR leaders privately see significant improvement only in the long term, with the aging (seventy-two-year-old) Le Pen's departure from the political scene. In their view, there is no one of stature in the FN left to succeed him, only "courtesans, sycophants, and incompetents." Though they continue to speak publicly about an alliance strategy and leaving the ghetto, their short-term expectations are rather minimal.

No further analysis is necessary regarding Le Pen's strategy; he never spoke about transforming the FN, alliances, or leaving the ghetto. His strategy was predicated on emerging as a savior from the impending collapse of the French political system, or at least the terminal disgrace of its political elite. This doomsday scenario is ardently believed by his loyalists. Though the party has been momentarily damaged by "felons, traitors and ingrates" (i.e., the Mégret camp), its prospects have never been brighter. Thus, e.g., Maurice Gros, long-time leader of the FN in Marseille, never has felt more optimistic about Le Pen's prospects than he does now.[7] In reality, never had the FN done so poorly in Marseille as it did in the last municipal election, both absolutely and in relation to the MNR, but Gros, without a trace of guile or intended hyperbole, sees the pot of gold on the rainbow's other side. In effect, Le Pen's supporters had no strategy besides what the French refer to as *la politique du pire*, or what the Italians call "*tanto peggio, tanto meglio.*"

More interesting is the development of Mégret's group; it was they, after all, who took the transformation of the FN seriously. An alliance strategy for them had never been problematic. Never having been part of the old reactionary far right, never having felt uncomfortable in the enemies' lair, they viewed the moderate right, especially Chirac (the devil incarnate for *lepenistes*), without prejudice. In fact, unlike Le Pen' *anciens*, they emerged from the very "*établissement*" Le Pen vilifies and have similar backgrounds as their would-be allies in the parliamentary right. In France it is often forgotten that Mégret and the other *modernes* had once been prominent young men on the way up within this orbit, contemporaries of Alain Juppé, Jacques Toubon and Jean-Francois Mancel. Mégret, educated at Polytechnique, Ponts-et-Chaussées, and Berkeley, had been a member of the RPR central committee from 1979 to 1981, and

7. Interview with Gros, July 5, 2001.

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in 1981 he ran against socialist leader Michel Rocard as the RPR candidate in Les Yvelines. Yvan Blot,[8] educated at ENA, protégé first of Jacques Chirac and then Charles Pasqua, had also been on the RPR's central committee. In 1976 he had served in the cabinet of Interior Minister Michel Poniatowski. Jean-Yves Le Gallou, another *énarque*, was active in the *Parti républicain* (now *Démocratie libérale*) and the UDF. Though older than others, and lacking a degree from one of the grands écoles, Jean-Claude Bardet also began his adult political career in the parliamentary right, after having been an OAS activist in his student days. More marked by his time in GRECE (*Groupement de recherche et d'études pour la civilisation européenne*) and the influence of Alain de Benoist than the others, he was the least enthusiastic about entering the FN in the mid-1980s, and became the strongest advocate for a total break with the far right when Megret's party was formed at the Marignane congress.

Indeed, what differentiated this group from other young conservatives during the first half of the 1980s was membership in the New Right, first GRECE[9] and then the more technocratic and activist Club de l'Horloge. Due mainly to de Benoist, Antonio Gramsci had become a major theoretical influence on the New Right at this time, and a major programmatic theme became the development of a *Gramscisme de Droite*, understood specifically as a rightist appropriation of the Italian communist intellectual's concept of hegemony.[10] In this view, after 1968 the left dominated French culture and Gaullism was in ruins; only with new

8. After initially siding with Mégret, Blot returned to the FN. According to the other *mégretistes*, he was motivated by opportunism, not wanting to lose his FN seat in the European Parliament. He is included here because he was a member of the initial Mégret group and a formidable influence on Mégret himself, especially in providing an indeological education to the young technocrat and steering him to the Club de l'Horloge.

9. Unlike Le Gallou and Blot, the younger Mégret had never been a member of GRECE which these two had already left to form the Club de l'Horloge, Mégret's first contact with the New Right. Though de Benoist is frequently linked, erroneously so, to the FN on the sole basis of Le Gallou, Blot and Pierre Vial's early and brief membership in GRECE, he has been openly and consistently critical of the FN. See Frank Adler, "Racism, difference and the Right in France," in *Modern and Contemporary France*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (1995). For the definitive treatment of the French New Right, see Pierre-André Taguieff, *Sur la nouvelle droite* (Paris: Descartes & Cie, 1994).

10. Whereas de Benoist's appropriation of Gramsci was limited to cultural struggle and became the basis of GRECE's concept of *métapolitique*, the renunciation of political activism, the Mégret group bears the influence of Gramci's political concepts — the same concepts that were formative in the PCI's development under Togliatti and Berlinguer: war of position, historical blocs, prefiguration. In this sense, one sees a certain similarity in a strategic commitment to alliance formation, and in presenting cities under their control as showcases and anticipations of future national rule.

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ideas, new organizations, and a new politics could the right reassert its traditional dominance. In this sense, the Club de l'Horloge was understood to be a forum for the articulation of such ideas.

In 1982, Mégret with his associates created CAR (*Comités d'action républicaine*) which, unlike the Club de l'Horloge, was to become the nucleus of a new political party situated in the ambiguous political space to the right of the RPR, but clearly to the left of the far right, a space Bardet refers to simply as "the right of the right."[11] By the end of 1981, Mégret was convinced that the parliamentary right had shown itself both incapable of resolving France's problems and immune to serious reconstitution. Thus, any strategy of *entrisme*, particularly within the dominant RPR, was hopeless.[12] Yet by 1984, when CAR was receiving overtures from Le Pen, it had become evident that founding a new political party was more difficult than the Mégret group had initially anticipated, especially given their relative youth, lack of public recognition, and, most importantly, the absence of sufficient material resources. They were unable to enter the European elections of 1984, and an effort to run in a number of cantonal elections in 1985 was largely unsuccessful.[13] It was precisely at this time that the FN made its breakthrough on the national political scene, and a choice had to be made whether to continue with an autonomous political effort that seemed to be going nowhere, or joining an ascendant political movement with resources but little in the way of organization and ideas, just the populist charisma of Le Pen who had suddenly captured the nation's attention (the "phénomène Le Pen," as it was called at the time).

Bardet wrote a confidential memo highly critical of the FN and recommended keeping it at a distance so that CAR's identity would not be compromised or confused with these malcontents, "who come from the most reactionary and retrograde far right."[14] Nevertheless, Bardet joined the other CAR members in entering the FN at the end of 1985. Le Pen, who had neither the desire nor the administrative competence to actually direct the management of a modern political party, as opposed to having led till then an amorphously structured groupuscule, gave Mégret and his associates almost complete autonomy in all areas of party organization other than the finances which Le Pen personally controlled.[15] Betraying a

11. Interviews with Bardet, January 20, 1999, and June 21, 2001.
12. Interview with Mégret, July 14, 1998.
13. Interview with Le Gallou, June 22, 2001.
14. Michael Darmon and Romain Rosso, *L'après Le Pen* (Paris: Seuil 1998), pp. 199-200.
15. Interview with Le Gallou, June 22, 2001.

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paranoia which would surface whenever another FN personality received any independent adulation from party members or attention from the press, Le Pen was far more preoccupied at the time with rivalry from the party's secrétaire général, Jean-Pierre Stirbois, who would die in an automobile accident at the end of 1988. Never did Le Pen imagine that these faceless technocrats, as he saw them then, would slowly implement their own program and attempt ultimately to commandeer the party itself. Le Pen always tended to judge people on the basis of physical stature and force of personality. Neither the diminutive Mégret, whose size he would mercilessly ridicule in public when the final rupture took place, nor any of Mégret's associates, posed any perceived risk.

At no point did Mégret criticize Le Pen in meetings of the party's various executive committees, even on those few occasions when others questioned Le Pen's anti-Semitic remarks and other gratuitous acts of bad taste that were giving the party a poor image. Thus, when in 1987 moderate notables like Blanchot, Frédéric-Dupont and d'Ormesson raised such points, they were rudely attacked by Le Pen. Mégret sat silent. When Pierre Sergent, in 1992, complained that the party's image was too negative, that the FN *fait peur*, that the party needs to show a new face, all points which anticipated Mégret's own critique in 1997, Mégret had nothing to say. His *mutisme*, in fact, was a main motif in an insider's account of this period, written before the rupture.[16] Mégret certainly agreed with Le Pen's critics, but the time was not yet right to commit a tactical mistake that risked placing his own project in jeopardy. As Mégret remarked about Pierre Sergent, for whom he had "great admiration," Sergent was "not political,"[17] he spoke at an inopportune time and as an isolated individual.

There would be no frontal assault on Le Pen, instead a Gramscian "war of position," a slow, deliberate, carefully calibrated battle for ideological and institutional hegemony within the party. Mégret's group would do so through dominating the party apparatus, articulating the party program, and, most importantly, training a new generation of party leaders in their own image. They created such new structures as the CEA (*Centre d'études et d'argumentaires*), a think tank aimed at recruiting support from non-FN industrial managers, upper-level functionaries, magistrates and military officers; the GAP (*Groupe d'action parlementaire*), an exclusively FN group of technocrats, professionals and university professors that would generate programmatic and legislative initiatives; and the IFN

16. Roland Gaucher, *La Montée du FN* (Paris: Jean Picollec, 1997).
17. Interview with Mégret, July 14, 1998.

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(*Institut de formation nationale*), a party school that was to offer organizational and ideological training to the young cadres. Two other "Gramscian" initiatives should be noted. First, penetrating "civil society" through the creation of new institutional structures among public-sector labor unions, business associations and cultural movements; second, "prefiguring" what FN might look like at the national level through the conquest and administration of municipalities which would serve as showcases. As Mégret put it, "The conquest of a certain number of municipalities represents the first base for the conquest of national power . . . It is a permanent laboratory to prove concretely that the FN is a political force."[18] By way of contrast, Le Pen was largely uninterested in such initiatives. He was most focused on presidential elections, where his own persona was central, and not at all on municipal campaigns. In the eyes of Mégret's group, for Le Pen the party was simply an instrument for self-promotion, while they were singularly concerned with preparing for the conquest of power and ruling. For them, Le Pen was most interested in his own celebrity, certainly not in the arduous work and mundane humdrum of actual governance. When, in 1995, Le Gallou informed him that the party had a good chance of winning the town halls of Toulon, Orange and Marignane, Le Pen replied "God help us!" When, at party headquarters, everyone else was jubilant at the victories in the three cities, Le Pen alone remained aloof and disengaged.[19] Mégret's 1997 conquest of Vitrolles through an absolute majority, not another triangular victory, was an important aspect of his faction's triumph over Le Pen, Bruno Gollnisch and the old guard at the party's Tenth Party Congress at Strasbourg in March 1997. "Vitrolles," chanted repeatedly, symbolized a new form of concrete leadership and practical political success, contrasted to the seventy year-old Le Pen's empty rhetoric and propensity to shoot himself and the party in the foot.

The Shrinking Ghetto

Before the Congress at Marignane, Mégret had spoken repeatedly about the need to leave the ghetto. At one time or another, the argument ran, one French elector out of three had voted for the FN or at least agreed with aspects of its program, yet in any given national election it could not

18. Renaud Dely, *Histoire Secrète du Front National* (Paris: Grasset, 1999), p. 82. This is thus far the best account in print of the rupture. Though Dely, a journalist from *Libération*, is regarded as an ideological adversary, MNR leaders vauch for the book's journalistic accuracy.

19. Interview with Le Gallou, June 22, 2001.

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get beyond the ghetto of 15%. By recuperating all or part of the "lost" 15%, the FN could become the third largest party in France, after the socialists and the RPR. This would put it in a position to eventually become the pole around which the right might be reconstituted. In order for this objective to be realized, the FN would have to dedemonize itself, put on a new public face, and establish an effective working relation with the *droite classique*. It soon became clear that none of this would ever come to pass, in part because of strategic contradictions Mégret had failed to take into account, much less resolve. The consequence was a ghetto for the FN and MNR *combined* even smaller than 15%, 10% and perhaps shrinking to still less.

At Marignane, Mégret set for himself two contradictory objectives: first, to recuperate as much as possible of the FN's base; second, to reach out to disaffected supporters of the moderate right. He ended up, as Bardet put it, neither securing the FN's base nor attracting votes from the right of the right.[20] The first group, in the 1999 European elections, voted for Le Pen, the second for the newly formed RPF led jointly by Pasqua and de Villiers who in fact took advantage of the parliamentary right's disarray and occupied the very space Bardet had intended for the MNR.

In preparation for the Marignane congress, Bardet sent a memo to Mégret advocating a total break with the extreme right which, in his view, commanded no more than 1 or 2% of the vote. A strategic choice had to be made between two irreconcilable constituencies; by unambiguously renouncing one, there would be the possibility of securing the other. And renouncing the extreme right, in the general sense, would not be sufficient. In order to really attract support from the right of the right, Mégret would have to distance himself specifically from the most odious elements of the FN's program, adopting, e.g., a more nuanced stand on immigration. Toward this end, Bardet suggested, the theme of identity would be a good point of departure, providing it could be developed in a more inclusive, less essentialist direction.

Caught between Bardet and Le Gallou, who on immigration was arguably even more extreme than Le Pen (his book, *La préférence nationale* had served as the single most important point of reference for the FN's stand on the treatment of immigrants), Mégret clearly sided more with Le Gallou than Bardet in placing primacy on the theme of immigration and recuperating the FN's base. Not even symbolic gestures were made toward the moderate right. In his speech closing the congress, Mégret

20. Interview with Bardet, June 21, 2001.

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even omitted reading a sentence in the prepared text delivered to journalists concerning the need to reach out to elements in the RPR and UDF.[21]

There were two obstacles to following Bardet's advice. First, it would be almost impossible to renounce the FN's programmatic stands on immigration or anything else, since, more than anyone else, Mégret was responsible for having written all the major FN programmatic statements for the past fifteen years. Second, there were those who came to Marignane more opposed to Le Pen, seeing him as an obstacle to the forward movement of the party, than they were committed, as such, to Mégret or to any fundamental change of party line. Their problem was with the leadership of Le Pen, particularly his inappropriate conduct, not the party; their complaint was with the messenger, not the message. As Damien Bariller, Mégret's right hand man, suggests, Mégret was faced with a heterogeneous group of delegates who would attend the congress, not all Mégret loyalists.[22] Such heterogeneity could not be ignored in trying to manage a consensus and work toward a successful outcome. This exigency undoubtedly contributed toward anomalies and contradictions that marked the congress from the very outset, when a written greeting was read to the assembled delegates from none other than François Brigneau, one of the most odious dinosaurs from the old reactionary right, an inveterate anti-Semite who had served under Vichy in the *milice*, and later became a journalist obsessed with Jewish power and influence. Undoubtedly, Brigneau's break with Le Pen was in itself significant, and contributed to the process underway of delegitimating the old chief, yet it was precisely types like Brigneau, and the baggage they carried, who were to be discarded in putting on a new public face. By calling for a special party congress to settle the dispute, and by trying, via this route, to effectively "depose" Le Pen and secure the party name, Mégret's strategic options were far more limited than they might have been had he simply broken with the FN and called for the formation of a new party based on his own independent vision.

Mégret still believes that there is an opportunity to cultivate supporters beyond the ghetto, those "to the right of the right," especially those disenchanted with the parliamentary right's failure to defend French identity and traditional values, as well as those disaffected from the left. Based on an Ipsos poll conducted in May 2000 for *Le Figaro Magazine*, the French electorate can be divided into four groups: *Les Lutteurs* (18%), *Les Mutants* (29%), *Les Marchands* (22%) and *Les Gardiens* (31%). The *Gardiens* are

21. Renaud Dely, *Histoire*, p. 289.
22. Interview with Bariller, July 12, 2001.

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opposed to more immigration, the construction of mosques in France's large cities, the right to vote in municipal elections for foreigners, regularizing illegal immigrants, legalizing marijuana, allowing gay couples to adopt children, and applying E.U. directives on hunting. Although coming mainly from the right, they define themselves across the political spectrum; 57% as right, 25% as left. As Mégret put it in a speech delivered on January 21, 2001 in Versailles, referring to the *Gardiens*, "Ipsos reveals that this new socio-political group, which does not yet recognize itself in one of the existing political parties, is the most important since it represents 31% of the population and is in full expansion." The MNR's positions, Mégret insists, correspond to this new and growing constituency. "That is why, dear friends, the future smiles on us."[23] The problem with this analysis, according to Bardet, is that it repeats the same mistake as the earlier 30% calculation (that 30% of the electorate could be recuperated, the 30% that either voted for the FN at one time or another, or shares the FN's views on issues such as immigration). Bardet says that the 30 or 31% figure is largely "mythical," as this projected MNR constituency is unlikely ever to be captured by any one political party and, in fact, distributes its votes among the parties of the parliamentary right and left, as well as Pasqua's RPF and the FN. In fact, what Mégret did not mention in his speech is that the same Ipsos poll indicates that only 12% of the *Gardiens* sympathized with the FN and MNR, compared to 32% for the *gauche plurielle*, and 42% for the parliamentary right. Once again, Bardet's realism should have been heeded. In order to break out of the political ghetto, Mégret needed to break with the FN's past, not simply Le Pen.

When his defining moment arrived, Mégret emerged not as someone who could lead the party in a new direction, but simply as Le Pen's competitor for the same restricted extreme right constituency. In fact, in the months after Marignane, he seemed to be little more than a meaner, more extreme, and certainly less entertaining Le Pen. Like Al Sharpton in New York, he showed up any time there was a local dispute involving immigrants, or plans to build a mosque, or when a plant was to close because, according to him, it was the same *mondialistes* undercutting the French economy who were, at the same time, undermining French identity through immigration. While he steered clear of Le Pen's anti-Semitism and preoccupation with Jewish lobbies, Mégret's tone was notably harsher in diatribes against immigration and the threat of Islam, even rather ludicrously

23. For Mégret's speech, see the MNR's website, www.m-n-r.com. The Ipsos poll may be downloaded from www.canalipsos.com.

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attacking the FN for its alleged "multiculturalism," having run a few black and arab local candidates (e.g., Stéphane Durbec, Farid Smahi) in a fairly transparent effort to demonstrate it was not racist, *malgré tout*.

Instead of presenting the public with a new face, the MNR remains thus far a carbon copy of the FN; its website appeals exclusively to an farright audience, and its monthly magazine, *Le Chêne*, is practically indistinguishable from the FN's *Français d'abord!* in layout, style, ideology and adulation of the party leader, despite the undeniable intelligence and talent of its young editor, Christophe Dungelhoeff. The continuity between *Français d'abord!* and *Le Chêne* is partially attributable to the fact that before the split, *Français d'abord!* had been edited by Mégret's right-hand man and Dungelhoeff's friend, Damien Bariller, who also had done his university studies at Aix-en-Provence. That Dungelhoeff would emulate Bariller's model is surprising only because Mégret's project initially had been based on presenting a new public face and cultivating a new identity. Obviously, this could not be done by stressing, symbolically and substantively, continuity with the past and a break only with the *persona* of Le Pen. In short, the MNR has failed to elaborate any ideas other than those already represented in the FN's standard repertoire, or to reach out to the "right of the right," as Bardet had counseled. Mégret has neither positioned himself as a real alternative to Le Pen, nor is he any longer regarded as a moderate, in contrast with Le Pen's extremism. Today it is unimaginable that anyone of Alain Peyrefitte's stature would suggest, as Peyrefitte did in 1997, that Mégret is more *fréquentable* than Le Pen, someone with whom the parliamentary right could do business. In fact, even Bariller concedes Mégret's image has suffered badly. By trying to outlepen Le Pen, he lost credibility as a moderate, as well as the opportunity to proceed with the earlier commitments to reform and dedemonize the party. Consequently, there has been no discernable cultural break with the past, and therefore no new beginning. According to Bariller, these concerns have become topics of intense debates within the MNR, with some calling for a return to the original project and the removal of all ambiguity. However, it is highly unlikely that anything will come of this because the fundamental problem is less one of style than substance. No affirmative concept of a different and qualitatively better French future has been articulated, other than the simple proposition that by removing certain presumed threats to the nation (immigrants, mosques, McDonalds, and multinationals), the suppressed organic quality of France will inevitably re-flower.

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Conclusion

The far right today is far weaker than it had been before the rupture, when the charisma of Le Pen was combined with the administrative competence of Mégret, when the ghetto was 15%, not 10. While not necessarily helping Mégret, defections from Le Pen revealed he was no longer a "federator" of the extreme right, as he had been earlier, but instead had become a source of division. The right wing press, which had always given him unqualified support, chose to remain neutral in his battle with Mégret; besides François Brigneau, Martin Peltier, another major right-wing journalist, broke with Le Pen and joined the MNR. Also joining Mégret were former Le Pen loyalists like Franck Timmermans, who had been in the FN from the very beginning, and Serge Martinez, who at one time Le Pen had thought of appointing *secrétaire général* to counter Mégret, and, of course, Le Pen's own daughter, Marie-Caroline. Revelations concerning corruption and nepotism served to discredit Le Pen, and place in doubt his famous slogan "Tête haute et mains propres." Le Pen, for his part, strategically sought to undermine Mégret's status as a moderate, claiming that the *mégretistes* were none other than "an extremist, activist even a racist minority."[24] In the battle between Le Pen and Mégret, there were no real winners; both lost ground, as did the far right. This leads back to the starting point, regarding the eclipse of immigration as a hot-button political issue. While the crisis of the far right might not be the only cause, it certainly is the most immediate and compelling.

24. *Le Monde*, December 8, 1998.

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Thinking Beyond Cosmopolitan Ghosts: On the Relevance of the Avant-Garde

André C. Drainville

Specters of all sorts are haunting global politics — cosmopolitan ghosts for whom global conferences are being convened, transnational protests, waged and global blueprints drawn.[1] Variously called "international public opinion," "the peoples of the earth," or "the global NGO community," today's planetary subjects are akin to Rousseau's and Diderot's world citizens, Kant's or Tristan's wandering foreigners, Marx's

1. These range from the World Bank's civic schemes to reformist plans for a "Tobin Tax," or a people's UN assembly, to ideas for global social contracts, to more radical schemes for the reinvention of the world economy. On the Tobin tax and related proposals, see Robert Cassani, "Financing Civil Society for a Global Responsibility," in *Futures* 27, (March 1995), pp. 215-221; David Felix, "The Tobin Tax Proposal: Background, Issues and Prospects," in *Futures* 27, No. 2 (1995), pp. 195-208; James Tobin, "A Proposal for International Monetary Reform," in *The Eastern Economic Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 3-4 (July/October 1978), pp. 153-159. On a second UN assembly and related reforms, see Daniele Archibugi, "The Reform of the UN and Cosmopolitan Democracy: A Critical Review," in *Journal of Peace Research* 30 (1993), pp. 301-315; Daniele Archibugi and David Held, eds., *Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New World Order* (London: Polity Press, 1995); David Goldblatt, "At the Limits of Political Possibility: The Cosmopolitan Democratic Project," in *New Left Review* 225, (September/October 1997), pp. 140-150; David Held, "Democracy, the Nation-State and the Global System," in *Economy and Society* 20 (May 1991), pp. 138-172; David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); William P. Kreml and Charles W. Kegley Jr., "A Global Political Party: The Next Step," in *Alternatives* (January-March 1996), pp. 123-134. On a global social contract (frequently discussed in the French literature), see Groupe de Lisbonne, *Limites à la compétitivité: vers un nouveau contrat mondial* (Montréal: Boréal, 1995); Ricardo Petrella, "Pour un contrat social mondial," in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (July 1994), pp. 20-21; and Ricardo Petrella, *Écueils de la mondialisation: Urgence d'un nouveau contrat social* (Montréal: Fides, 1997).

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proletariat and other cosmopolitan creatures — all abstractions elevated by rhetorical, moral, scientific, or philosophical means to make a point, for sake of political credence, or to serve as heuristic devices.

When global capitalism was a "minority phenomenon" — of consequence to many, but steered by few — inventing cosmopolitan surrogates was necessary to breathe social presence into the world economy and to think about politics where it was not actually made.[2] From the 16th century to the end of *Pax Americana*, global capitalism expanded, but the nation-state remained the context for capitalist development and opposition to it. Internationally, financiers and capitalists (from the Fuggers to the trans-Atlantic bourgeoisie) met like-minded competitors as well as soldiers and diplomats, but no other opposition.[3] Even in the golden-age of working-class (and bourgeois) internationalism in the latter half of the 19th century, actual struggles were defined mainly in national terms, and cosmopolitan stand-ins needed to be invented for global social relations to be hypothesized.

In the last two decades, however, the world economy has become a critical "place of encounters" (to borrow Henri Lefebvre's definition of cities). Now, social presence need no longer be simulated by cosmopolitan artifices in order to be studied at the global level: it can be examined from actual practice. Yet, one still reason from imagined wholes and consequences, as if one still needed proxies detached from transnational experience in order to think beyond immediate circumstances.

Assumed to be parts of an ethereal — thus insubstantial — whole abstracted from concrete contexts, the wretched of the world cannot be imagined taking part in any transformative struggle against transnational power. Ghostly, cosmopolitan creations cannot be imagined as subjects able to make history. Rather, they can only dissolve into a mollifying consensus meant to humanize global capitalism, but not challenge it. To see through cosmopolitan ideology, it is necessary not just to rise above transnational practices, but to stay with them long enough to see what they entail.[4] Keeping in mind the experiences of the historical avant-garde, the

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2. Fernand Braudel, quoted from *Une leçon d'histoire de Fernand Braudel* (Paris: Arthaud-Flammarion, 1985), pp. 93-94.

3. Marx recognized this as a defining characteristic of the world economy. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Articles on Britain* (Moscow: Progress Publisher, 1971).

4. See Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings* (New York: Schoken Books, 1986), pp. 221-238, cited in François Bott, "Les situationnistes et l'économie cannibale," in *Les temps modernes*, Vol. 27, No. 299-300 (1971), pp. 2175-2181.

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following will search beyond conventional ways of thinking to theorize recent global developments.[5]

The Present Moment

The last twenty years are most often seen as the years after *Pax Americana*, before transnational hegemony, cosmopolitan concord and other predicted ends of history. But if thinking shifts from order to change, the same period can be thought of as a moment unto itself: a critical juncture when places have opened up in the world economy for social forces to meet, with indeterminate, perhaps radical consequences.[6]

In the early 1980s, when the World Bank (and the IMF) began moving toward more social and political strategies of adjustment, NGOs [7] and other partner organizations began to be "mainstreamed"[8] into the policy process. In 1982, the "NGO-World Bank Committee" was created to serve as an arena for policy discussions between senior World Bank staff and NGO leaders from all continents, with a secretariat at the Costa Rica headquarters of ALOP (Latin American Association of Development Organizations). In August 1988, as the World Bank was introducing its "Social Dimension of Adjustment Program" and gathering its first "NGO Profile Database" containing preliminary information on more than 8,000 NGOs, the Committee published the first World Bank operational statement on the relation between the World Bank and

5. See Guy-Ernest Debord, ed., *Oeuvres cinématographiques complètes 1952-1978* (Paris: Champs Libre, 1978), pp. 15-32; and Elisabeth Sussman, ed., *On the Passage of a Few People Through a Rather Brief Moment in Time: The Situationist International, 1957-1972* (Cambridge/Boston: The MIT Press/The Institute of Contemporary Art, 1989).

6. This occurs in places reserved by the World Bank *et al.* "at the apex of social hierarchies in the emerging world order" where, according to Stephen Gill, globalizing élites have been gathering to celebrate the global growth machine. See Stephen Gill, "Structural Change and Global Political Economy: Globalizing Elites and the Emerging World Order," in Yoshikazu Sakamoto, ed., *Global Transformation: Challenges to the State System* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1994), pp. 169-198.

7. These include NGOs, GONGOs, QUANGOs and GOINGOs. NGOs are "Non-Governmental Organizations," GONGOs "Government-Organized Non-Government Organizations," QUANGOs "Quasi-Nongovernmental Organizations," and GOINGOs "Government-Induced Non-Governmental Organizations." See Thomas G. Weiss and Leon Gordenker, eds., *NGO's, the UN, & Global Governance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996).

8. On "mainstreaming," see Michael M. Cernea, "Nongovernmental Organizations and Local Development" (Washington: World Bank, 1988); Lawrence F. Salmen and A. Paige Eaves, "Interactions between Nongovernmental Organizations, Governmenta and the World Bank: Evidence from Bank Projects," in Samuel Paul and Arturo Israel, eds., *Non-governmental Organizations and the World Bank: Cooperation for development, World Bank Regional and Sectoral Studies* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 1991), pp. 94-133.

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NGOs. In 1990, the World Bank published a "high-profile review" that emphasized its role in "mitigating the adverse cost of structural adjustment" by means of broader concepts of social development.[9] Before the end of the year, a "Learning Group on Participatory Development" was established. In September 1994, at the opening of the Caribbean Public Information Center in Kingston (the World Bank's first information center dedicated to NGO's), the Group presented the Board with The World Bank and Participation Report.[10] Within a year, the Bank had set up an "Interagency Group on Participation" (IGP) and a "Task Force on Operational Collaboration" (TOC). Both involved the World Bank's key operational managers, and further detailed the terms of NGO-World Bank collaboration. In 1996, the World Participation Sourcebook was published by the newly created "Environmentally Sustainable Development" division. In terms of funding, "Social Funds" windows were opened that tripled transfers to NGOs.[11]

After the transition in Eastern Europe and the 1997 Asian financial crises revealed the fragility of neo-liberal arrangements and the need for global regulatory bodies to work "alongside host countries" to secure viable adjustments, the Word Bank moved to further systematize its relation with NGOs and other social partners. Of special interest here is the work done by the World Bank's "Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Network" (ESSDN) to develop a comprehensive framework for Social Assessment.[12] Part screening mechanism, part operating procedure, both a mean "to avoid project failure" and an end unto itself, the ESSDN's Social Assessment framework is now used by the World Bank to judge feasibility, establish policy priorities, identify and gage "key stakeholders" and structure participation most efficiently. In like

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9. World Bank Annual Review, 1990, cited from Thomas G. Weiss and Leon Gordenker, eds., *NGO's, the UN, & Global Governance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996).

10. Participation and NGO Group, "The World Bank's Partnership with Nongovernmental Organizations" (Washington: Poverty and Social Policy Department (PSP), World Bank, 1996), p. 19.

11. S. Jorgensen, M. Grosh, and M. Schacter, "Social Action Programs and Social Funds," (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, Africa Technical Department, Human Resources Division, 1993); Deepa Narayan and Katrina Ebbe, *Design of Social Funds: Participation, Demand Orientation, and Local Organisation Capacity*, Vol. 375, *World Bank Discussion Paper* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 1997).

12. Allegedly, "for prioritizing, gathering, analyzing and incorporating social information and participation into the design and delivery of development operations." See Jennifer Rietbergen-McCraken and Deepa Narayan, eds., *Participation and Social Assessment: Tools and Techniques* (Washington: IRBD/World Bank, 1998).

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spirit was the Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative (SAPRI), launched by the Bank and a pupose-made NGO network that involved more than "1,200 citizens' organizations committed to fostering public debate on structural adjustment." In 1999, the World Bank could boast of increased inclusion. "Of the 25 CASs prepared during FY1999, 22 included active civil society participation."[13]

In the last two decades, regional affiliates of the World Bank have also begun reserving places for NGOs and others social partners. For instance, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has opened new funding windows and "social investment funds" to encourage and structure NGO participation. Institutionally, the IDB set up a "State and Civil Society Division," a Women in Development (WID) unit, and a "Social Programs and Sustainable Development Department" that have funneled resources to NGOs. In like manner, the African Development Bank (ADB) created new policy units to increase and structure social participation.[14] In 1985, the ADB created a WID policy unit "to increase women's leadership and participation," and in 1987 a "Socio-Environmental Division" (later renamed the "Environmental and Social Policy Division"). Still in 1987, the ADB started the "Social Dimension of Adjustment Program" (SDAP 1987-1992), perhaps the most ambitious program of participatory development.

In the early 1990s, the SDAP engendered the "Network for Environmental and Sustainable Development in Africa" (NESDA 1991) and the "Environment and Sustainable Development Unit" (OESU), that have become an anchoring point for NGOs. When the SDAP ended, the ADB adopted the "Poverty Alleviation Strategy and Action Programme" (PASAP 1992), to make adjustment sustainable and structure the relation between state agencies, donors, and would-be representatives of African society. In the manner of the World Bank's ESSDN, the PASAP has worked to develop a comprehensive framework for social assessment.

Also close to places where globalizing *élites* meet are opposition forces gathering to monitor and influence transnational policy or to militate against their consequences. Exceptional a decade ago, such gatherings have now become almost commonplace. The largest have been held in the vicinity of

13. CAS are "Country Assistance Strategies," the World Bank's near-term business plans for borrowing countries. Statistics are from The World Bank, "The World Bank, NGOs and Civil Society," (Washington: The World Bank Group, 2000).

14. E. Philip English and Harris M. Mule, *The African Development Bank*, Vol. 1, *The Multilateral Development Banks* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner/The North South Institute, 1996).

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global conferences organized by the UN to solve global problems.[15]

Lately, medleys of protesters have also converged to place where globalizing *élites* gather. The first WTO ministerial conference in May 1998 was a coming out party for the "Peoples' Global Action Against Free Trade and the World Trade Organisation" (PGA). In spite of police blockades, a parade of two hundred tractors and bicycles made its way through the streets of Geneva. A month later, on July 18, a "Laugh Parade" greeted G-7 heads of state meeting in Cologne. At the head of the parade were the leaders of the "InterContinental Caravan for Solidarity and Resistance," just closing a month-long protest tour of European countries. 50,000 protesters gathered in Seattle on November 30, 1999, to force the closing of the second WTO ministerial conference. On April 16, 2000, 8,000 demonstrators met in Washington for the annual meeting of World Bank and IMF. In September, 15.000 were in Prague to protest the 55th annual WB/IMF summit.[16]

Once removed from the center of world orders are civic fora, workshops, round tables, town meetings and gatherings of local partners and stakeholders organized by central regulatory agencies or their affiliates[17] to bring some of the poor (and not so poor) into coalitions "broad enough

15. One dealt with ecological and economic sustainability in Rio; another with human rights in Vienna; yet another with women in Beijing; and one with shelter in Istanbul. More than 2,000 NGO representatives — 17,000 people in all — assembled in Rio, almost 3,000 in Vienna. 5,000 representatives from 2,000 NGOs — 30,000 women — gathered at the independent NGO forum in Huairou, before Beijing, the largest UN global conference in terms of NGO participation. Downstream from these conferences are preparatory meetings that, in the last decade, have grown into events unto themselves. Thus, the Third Preparatory Committee for the Beijing World Conference on Women, held at the UN headquarters in New York from March 15 to April 6 1995, brought together 1,500 NGO representatives. See Felice D. Gaer, "Reality Check: Human Rights NGOs Confront Governments at the UN," in *NGOs, The UN, & Global Governance*, in Thomas G. Weiss and Leon Gordenker, eds., *op. cit.*, pp. 51-66.

16. See Robin Hahnel, "Speaking Truth to Power: Speaking Truth to Ourselves," *Z* (June 2000), pp. 44-51.

17. See OECD (Development Assistance Committee), "DAC Principles for Effective Aid," (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1992); p. 27; J. Polak, *The Changing Nature of IMF Conditionality*, *Princeton University Essays in International Finance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). Using can-do language — increasingly popular in the age of globalization — the World Bank's Participation Sourcebook details a model experience: "The challenge was clear: get village infrastructure up and running, provide employment opportunities for local people, and find a way to inject cash into the most impoverished areas — fast . . . In August 1992 we began a small test project . . . No official village organizations existed at the time [in Albania], so we met with village 'chiefs' and informal village councils . . . Together, we decided on a 'village credit fund' (VCF) in which the entire village is held accountable for the loans of its members." World Bank, *The World Bank Participation Sourcebook*, Vol. 19, *Environmentally Sustainable Development* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1996).

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to provide sustained support for adjustment policies." In like relation are Local Urban Observatories and Urban ateliers, where social scientists and urban reformists seek to define global indicators, set best policy practices, increase compliance, and "mobilize people into organizes structures."[18]

Still further removed from the center of world order are local events accompanying summit protests. The birth of the PGA in Geneva, for instance, was echoed by "Global Street Parties" on all continents. In like fashion, N30 protests in Seattle were echoed by events in 43 countries. The largest were in Switzerland, where 5,000 people marched on the WTO headquarters in Geneva,[19] in France, where "75,000 people in 80 different cities" took to the streets, and in Manila, where 8,000 people attended a rally in front of the US embassy.[20] When they tried to enter the embassy, they were forcibly dispersed by police, which provoked further protests, both in Manila and elsewhere in the world.[21] J18 protests in Cologne occasioned street parties in twenty cities. The largest was in London, where tens of thousands walked through the city.

Furthest removed from the elite enclaves are innumerable transnational campaigns organized against the practices of global capitalism. These

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18. Christine Auclair, "Local Urban Observatories: Tailoring Indicators to Local Needs," in *UNCHS: Habitat Debate*, (March 1997), No. 1, pp. 4-5; Michael M. Cernea, "Nongovernmental Organizations and Local Development" (Washington: World Bank, 1988); Pietro Garau, "Experts' Meeting Launches European Observatory," in *UNCHS: Habitat Debate* (March 1997), p. 35; Wally N'Dow, "Editorial," in *UNCHS: Habitat Debate*, (March 1997), p. 2.; UNCHS, "Cooperation with Partners in the Context of Habitat II," *UNCHS: Habitat Debate*, (March 1997), pp. 9-10.

19. The birth of the PGA in Geneva, for instance, was echoed by "Global Street Parties" on all continents: In Montreal, Operation SalAMI, blockaded the Montreal Conference on Globalized Economies, an annual gathering of the political and corporate elite. In New Delhi hundreds of thousands of people gathered "for a mass rally and public meeting organized under the banner of the National Alliance of People's Movements. The participants included farmers, fish workers, laborers." In the Philippines, "one thousand marchers belonging to the fisherfolk movement Pambansang Lakasng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas . . . the peasant movement Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) and their supporters from churches and government employees, staged a protest against President Estrada's intentions to sustain and even expand programs that lay peasant and fisherfolk livelihoods open to attack from global market forces." In Berlin, a "huge sound system and a big drum group made the music, and people brought more drums, covered the streets with chairs and other furniture, danced, played volleyball, chess . . ." Sampled from Peoples' Global Action against "Free" Trade and the WTO, No. 2 (June 1998) posted on the PGA site at : "http://www.agp.org/agp/en/PGAInfos/ bulletin2/bulletin2b.html.

20. Sampled from "Selected Global Reports" of N30 events: <http:// www.freespeech.org/inter/world2.html>.

21. N30, "N30 1999 — Selected Global Reports," (http://www.freespeech.org/inter/world2.html: 1999).

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include campaigns against exploitation in export zones (in Saipan, Mexico, Guatemala or elsewhere), free-trade integration (in Asia or the Americas), brand-name exploitation (by Nike, General Electric, GAP, Reebok, Suzuki or Tommy Hilfiger), excision, sexual tourism; for abortion rights, wages for housework, the rights of immigrant workers, to free labor leaders or social activists (Ken Saro-Wiwa, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Wei Jingsheng, Wariebi K. Agamene, Frank O. Kokori) or to fight transnational policies.[22]

Thus, through initiatives of global regulating agencies and through various struggles against the consequences of globalization, at the center of the world order and in its margins, opposition emerges to confront the new developments. By cosmopolitan standards, these places are non-descript: they are all global agoras. More inclusive than *élite* enclaves, they promise to lay the basis for cosmopolitan democracy. To think more pointedly — and more politically — about what can be made of all this, it is worth considering the experiences of the historical avant-garde.

What the Avant-garde Did

Studies of world orders often refer to the Braudelian notion of the *longue durée*, to historical hegemonies (*Pax Mongolia*, the Dutch hegemony in the 16th century, *Pax Britannica*, *Pax Americana*), to "world cities" (Venice, Antwerp, Genoa, Amsterdam, London, New York) and to ruling minorities (the Medicis, the Fuggers, *haute* finance, the Atlantic bourgeoisie, transnational capital). Besides those portentous referents, the half-century between the end of WWI and May 1968 appears almost insignificant — a period that can be understood only in relation to what came before and after it. But if the focus shifts from order to change and to shorter durations, these same 50 years can be thought of not as an interval, but as a self-contained moment: an age of radical ferment, when the category of totality — including the idea of total revolution and what André Breton called "the will to total subversion" — radicalized critical thinking.[23] In this context, the "historical avant-garde" came into being and disappeared: Futurists, Dada, Surrealists and the Situationnist International. During this

22. See Michael Allen, "Wordly Wisdom," in *New Statesman & Society* 21 (May 1993), pp. xii-xiii; Andrew Herod, "Labor as an Agent of Globalization and as a Global Agent," in K. Cox, ed., *Globalization and its Politics: Critical Reappraisals* (New York: Guilford Press, 1995).

23. A. E. Housman, cited in Anselm Jappe, *Guy Debord*, tr. by Claude Galli (Paris: Sulliver/Via Valeriano, 1998), p. 41. Breton, cited in Robert S. Short, "The Politics of Surrealism 1920-1936," in Walter Laqueur and George L. Mosse, eds., *The Left-Wing Intellectuals between the Wars 1919-1936* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 6.

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period, avant-garde groups were born in places away from where the world orders was constituted: Futurism was born in Italy in 1909, in a time "of refreshment and peace, cheerfulness and prosperity," when "the ideal of a liberal regime was most fully realized"[24] just as it was challenged elsewhere; Dada started in Zurich, "a curiously snug island of peace away from the ravages of WWI, the temporary home of a host of revolutionaries, anarchists, bohemians, pacifists, and artists of all persuasions" and it moved to Paris.[25] The Situationist International was born in Paris in 1957, at the periphery of the bi-polar world. All avant-garde groups came into being in marginal places, away from ruling minorities, occasionally characterized by outstanding theaters, cabarets, cafés, art galleries, etc.

In their quotidian practice, artists struggle to create new meaning. To read Rimbaud's *Season in Hell* or Van Gogh's letters is to be moved by the immediacy of the new for artists, and by the frightening abandon with which some are sometimes engaged in the process of creation. Even in *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx never wrote with such urgency as felt Marguerite Duras alone, writing (" . . . either death or a book . . .") nor with such nearness to a changed world as experienced by Beaudelaire in *L'héroisme de la vie moderne*.[26] The significance these sentiments give quotidian struggles to create meaning is what make artist's effort to define their practice privileged occasions to think about the politics of change. Whether "forerunners and revealers" serving on the frontiers of changing societies, or more organically giving voice to a society's sense of itself, artists actualize — and thus radicalize — questions related to possibilities of creation.[27]

What makes the historical avant-garde relevant here is its relation to material circumstances. More than any other, this avant-garde questioned "art as an institution."[28] Struggling against alienation to preserve the

24. Benedetto Croce, *A History of Italy*, tr. by Cecilia M. Ady (New York: Russel & Russel, 1963).

25. See Malcom Green, "Preface," in Richard Huelsenbeck and Malcom Green, eds., *Dada Almanac (1920)*, Atlas Arkhive One/Documents of the Avant-Garde (London: Atlas Press, 1993), pp. i-xv. On reparations, see Philippe Bernard, *La fin d'un monde 1914- 1919*, vol. 12, *Nouvelle histoire de la France* (Paris: Seuil, 1975).

26. Marguerite Duras, *Writing*, tr. by Mark Polizzotti (Cambridge, MA: Lumen, 1998), p. 6; Charles Beaudelaire, "De l'héroisme de la vie moderne," in *Curiosités Esthériques/L'Art romantique* (Paris: Éditions Garnier Frères, 1980), pp. 195-200.

27. Artist as "forerunners and revealers" is from Gabriel-Désiré Laverdant's 1845 *De la mission de l'art et du rôle des artistes*, cited in Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, tr. by Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1968), p. 9.

28. Umbro Apollonio, "Introduction," in Umbro Apollonio, ed., *The Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973); Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, tr. by Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

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possibility of creation, this avant-garde saw itself as a "reflection of the main currents which determine the social evolution of humanity."[29] Thus grounded, it raised questions of considerable political significance.

Rupture

For Renato Poggioli, the historical avant-garde was defined by its will to break with inherited contexts, from grand narratives to everyday routines. The first historical avant-garde, Futurism, defined itself as *antipassatismo*, "the down-with-the-past movement." It attacked *bon mots* and insults flailing, any and all custodians of the old order: "We want to free this land from its smelly gangrene of professors, archaeologists, ciceroni and antiquarians."[30] Against "imbecile desires to shelter life from insecurities and surprises," F. P. Marinetti drove with reckless abandon and celebrated his spectacular wrecks.[31] Against sanctimonious humanism, proper syntax, the academy, libraries and museal authorities, Futurist poets freed punctuation, they dislocated sentences and celebrated war ("the world's only hygiene"), "beautiful ideas worth dying for and scorn for women." Against all cadres, Futurist painters broke bodies down with plays of light and illusions of simultaneity, they painted totalities and drew spectators in with *trompes-l'oeil* and multiple "force lines."[32] To batter down lyricism and melodic wholeness, Futurist musicians sampled street noises and machine sounds and they maximized counterpoints and tonal dissonance. Against pedestalled art, Futurist sculptors integrated cynetic creations in new, unsettling, environments. Against pastoral food in general and pasta in particular ("40% less nutritious than meat, fish or pulses, [it] ties today's Italians with its tangled threads to Penelope's slow looms and to somnolent old sailing-ships in search of wind"), Futurist chefs imagined banquets where food was, literally, thrown about. Thus, the Futurist wedding banquet was a "balancing act which corresponds to the couple's tightrope state of mind." Tureens of "magnificent soup, known and loved by all," sautéed mushrooms and "well-hung partridges" were precariously paraded about the celebrating couple, then spilled on

29. Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, *op.cit.* p. 80.

30. F. T. Marinetti, "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism (1909)," in Apollonio, ed., *Futurist Manifestos*, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-24.

31. The "Manifeste de la science futuriste (1915)," cited from Stefano Mecatti, "Giuseppa Bottai et "Roma futurista," in Mireille Guillet, ed., *Les assasins du clair de lune: questions sur le futurisme italien* (Marseilles: Éditions Via Valeriano, 1992), pp. 43-58.

32. Giovanni Lista, *Le Futurisme* (Paris: Hazan, 1985), pp. 18-19; Marianne W. Martin, *Futurist Art and Theory (1909-1915)* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1978), p. 89.

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them in various way and eaten off their lap.[33]

Dada, of course, was a demolishing enterprise. "There is a great destructive, negative task to be done" wrote Trisan Tzara in the first Dada anti-manifesto, "sweeping out, cleaning up."[34] With aggressive posturing, ludic insults, and blasphemous invectives, Dada waged an all-out offensive against all established cultural structures and the possibility of unique or coherent viewpoints. Against romantic narrative, Dada declaimed bruitist poems in monocord fashion; against bourgeois paintings, Dada doodled in oils. Against the authority of discourse, Dada cut-and-pasted words randomly. Against spectacular theater and the illusion of unlabored stories, Tzara mounted plays turned inside-out, where backstage was front and characters were as unstable as possible.[35] Flying in the face of history, the main exponents of the German Dada group (Grosz, Jung, Heartfield and Herzfelde) countered the failure of the Spartakist uprising by proclaiming a "Dada republic" in Nikolassee, a rich suburb of Berlin (a spoof that led the mayor to call a regiment of 2,000 troops.[36]

Surrealism too defined itself in oppositional terms. It was an "absolute revolt," "proper sabotage," the "ceaseless trial of everything."[37] Against all authority and institutions (the League of Nations — an old whore; *l'Humanité* — childish, for imbeciles), surrealists wrote injurious letters.[38] Against the myth of the creative soul, they brought spectators into the creative process.[39] Against certain metaphysics, they wondered about suicide.[40] Against the butchery of WWI, Breton (who served as an

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33. From F. T. Marinetti, "Wedding Banquet," in F. T. Marinetti, ed., *The Futurist Cookbook* (San Francisco: Badford Arts, 1989), pp. 112-113.

34. Cited in Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, *op.cit.* p. 63.

35. Henri Béhar, "Dada spectacle," in Sandro Briosi and Henk Hillenaar, ed., *Vitalité et contradictions de l'avant-garde* (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1988), p. 66.

36. Malcom Green, "Preface," in Huelsenbeck and Green, *op. cit.*, pp. i-xv.

37. Albert Camus, *L'Homme révolté* (Paris: Gallimard, 1951).

38. See Louis Aragon *et al.*, "Addresse au Pape" in *La révolution surréaliste* 3 (April 15, 1925), p. 16; Adolphe Ackner, *A la niche les glapisseurs de dieu* (Paris: Éditions Surréalistes, 1948); Antonin Artaud, "Contre-attaque: La patrie et la famille," in Atonin Artaud, ed., *Messages révolutionnaires* (Paris: Gallimard, 1979), pp. 11-23; Louis Aragon *et al.*, "Lettre aux recteurs des universités européennes," in *La révolution surréaliste* 3 (April 15, 1925), p. 11; José Pierre, *Tracts surréalistes et déclarations collectives*, Vol. 1, 1922-1939 (Paris: Le Terrain vague, 1980), pp. 19-25.

39. Max Ernst, "Qu'est-ce que le surréalisme? (1934)," in Max Ernst, ed., *Écritures* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), pp. 228-234.

40. Antonin Artaud, "Surréalisme et révolution," in Atonin Artaud, ed., *Messages révolutionnaires* (Paris: Gallimard, 1979), pp. 11-23; Francis James, *et al.*, "Enquête: le suicide est-il une solution?" in *La révolution surréaliste*, No. 2, (January 15 1925), pp. 9-15.

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intern in a psychiatric ward during the war) wrote of senseless deaths.[41]

Militantly modernist, Futurists had felt the "acceleration of life" and celebrated an idealized modernity continually transformed by science.[42] For the first avant-garde, cars were machines of freedom, newspapers enchanted "synthesis of a day in the world's life," and modern cities were the most exciting places. There was "but one law for artists, and that [was] modern life."[43] In contrast, the most noteworthy avant-garde of post-WWII, the Situationist International, was the first to define itself explicitly against modernity. For Guy Debord, Raoul Vaneigem *et al.*, the ability to picture the world (by which Heidegger had defined modernity and Lukàcs revolutionary knowledge) had already settled into a regime to govern daily life by emptying it of radical possibilities.[44] The constitutive principle of this modern regime was the willed separation between atomized individuals reduced to passive consumers of images, and shallow moments of false unity. Severed from experience, modern society was "without community," only whole in passive moments when it consumed alienating spectacles.[45] For the last avant-garde, cars were prisons, newspapers carriers of false, spectacular, consciousness; and modern cities were dead spaces of cadastral lives.[46]

Against vanguards that share in "the ineffectiveness and mystification of political specialization as a means of transforming the world,"[47] the Situationist International put itself at the center of the world.[48] Against

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41. André Breton, "Second manifeste du surréalisme," in *La révolution surréaliste* 12, (December 1929), pp. 1-17: : "The simplest surrealist gesture would be to go down into the street, revolver in hand, and start shooting randomly into the crowd for as long as possible."

42. See Umberto Boccioni, *et al.*, "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters (1910)," in Apollonio, ed., *The Futurist Manifestos*, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-27.

43. F.T. Marinetti, "Destruction of Syntax-Imagination Without Strings — Words in Freedom (1913)," in *Futurist Manifestos*, ed. by Umbro Apollonio (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), pp. 95-106.

44. Peter Wollen, "The Situationist International," in *New Left Review* 201 (March-April 1989), pp. 67-95.

45. Guy-Ernest Debord, "La société du spectacle (1973)," in Guy-Ernest Debord, ed., *Oeuvres cinématographiques complètes 1952-1978* (Paris: Champs Libre, 1978).

46. François Bott, "Les situationnistes et l'économie cannibale," in *Les temps moderne*, Vol. 27, No. 299-300 (1971), pp. 2175-2181; Richard Gombin, *The Origins of Modern Leftism*, tr. by Michael K. Perl (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976); Raoul Vaneigem, *Traité de savoir-vivre à l'usage des jeunes générations* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967).

47. Michèle Bernstein, "The Situationist International," in *The Times Literary Supplement* (September 3 1964), p. 781.

48. "I speak today, in my own name, and no one, in the name of Alabama or South Africa, or against spectacular exploitation, will convince me to forget that I am at the center of troubles . . . I will not abdicate my share of violence." See Raoul Vaneigem, *Traité de savoir-vivre à l'usage des jeunes générations* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), p. 31.

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sacred history and capitalist usefulness, it branded social housing "concentration camps."[49] Against the alienating spectacle of the Cold War and what E. P. Thompson termed "exterminism," they vowed never, under any circumstances, to "set foot in an atomic shelter."[50]

Techniques

Believing in an unprecedented epoch "of dynamism and simultaneity,"[51] Futurists enjoined artists to "breathe in the tangible miracles of contemporary life."[52] Dada too sought to emulate modern movement. Naturally, the mouth was the first locus of Dada thinking.[53] Once removed from the mouth, but as close to it as possible, were cabaret soirées where Dada tried everything to keep words and sounds flowing[54] in as many

49. Raoul Vaneigem, "Commentaires contre l'urbanisme," in *Internationale Situationiste* (August 1961), pp. 33-37.

50. The citation is from Jörgen Nash, "The Mutant Manifesto," in *The Times Literary Supplement* (September 3, 1964), pp. 782-783. See also E. P. Thompson, "Notes on Exterminism, the Last Stage of Civilization," in New Left Review, ed., *Exterminism and Cold War* (Lonon: Verso, 1982), pp. 1-34. I. S., "Géopolitique de l'hibernation," in *Internationale Situationniste* (April 1962), pp. 3-10.

51. Gino Severini, "The Plastic Analogies of Dynamism-Futurist Manifesto (1913)," in Apollonio, ed., *The Futurist Manifestos*, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-125.

52. "We intend to exalt aggressive action, a feverish insomnia, the racer's stride, the mortal leap, the punch and the slap . . . We want to hymn the man at the wheel, who hurls the lance of his spirit across the earth." See Marinetti, *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism*, *op. cit.* Futurist poets were to spend themselves "with ardour, splendour, and generosity, to swell the enthusiastic fervor of the primordial elements." For their part, Futurist painters were encouraged to suppress straight or parallel lines and maximize "the clash of acute angles," "dynamic arabesques" "ellipsoidal curves," zig-zags and wavy lines, to instill in viewers "a dynamic state which is the reflection of the surrounding movement." See Apollonio, "Introduction," *op.cit.*; Carlo Carrà, "The Painting of Sounds, Noises and Smells (1913)," in Apollonio, ed., *Futurist Manifestos*, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-115; Severini, "The Plastic Analogies," *op.cit.* Painting was to be in tune with ambient dynamism: "the gesture which we would reproduce on canvas shall no longer be a fixed moment in universal dynamism. It shall simply be the dynamic sensation itself." See Boccioni *et al.*, "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters," *op.cit.*

53. Micheline Tison-Braun, *Tristan Tzara inventeur de l'homme nouveau* (Paris: Librairie A.-G. Nizet, 1977).

54. To make Dada poems (Benjamin called them "word salads"), all one had to do was to let the luck of the draw shape phrases: "Take a newspaper. Take a pair of scissors. Choose in the newspaper an article of the length you wish your poem to be. Carefully cut up it up into words and put the words into a bag. Stir gently and pull words out one by one. Copy words in order as they come out of the bag." See Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in Hannah Arendt, ed., *Illuminations* (London: Fontana, 1973), pp. 217-251; and .Tristan Tzara, "Dada manifeste sur l'amour faible et l'amour amer," quoted in Hanne Bergius, "The Ambiguous Aesthetic of Dada: Towards a Definition of its Categories," in Richard Sheppard, ed., *Dada: Studies of a Movement*, (Buckinghamshire: Alpha Academic, 1980), p. 29.

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directions as possible, and spectators as engaged as could be in collective attempts to shake words out of their traditional stillness.

Born after the October revolution in Russia and failed uprisings in Germany, Austria, Finland, Italy and elsewhere, as modernism was losing its anti-bourgeois stance and radical politics was becoming a specialized activity, Surrealists were less trusting of ambient dynamism and more preoccupied with techniques to maintain creativity.[55] What Futurism and Dada had taken for granted, Surrealism sought to construct, which made it, in many ways, primarily a technical movement.[56] What distinguished *l'écriture automatique* from other ways of writing was its reliance on imposed cadences, both as a means of gaining prospection and as a mode of production. To free themselves from logic, morals, good taste, and the dictates of literature, and to bore into words for truer meanings, Breton, Soupault and others wrote — sometimes for ten hours at a time — carefully monitoring the impact of pre-determined cadences on their writing.[57]

Beyond *l'écriture automatique*, Surrealists explored other means to sustain inspiration and create meaning. At the beginning, they toyed (thus worked, for the avant-garde played purposefully) with hypnosis, occultism, and other tools of para-psychology, until repressed violence surfaced in some subjects who began to threaten themselves and others.[58]

55. André Breton and Philippe Soupault, *Les champs magnétiques (1919)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967).

56. When the first *Surrealist Manifesto* was published in 1924, Breton and Soupault had already been experimenting for five years with techniques. See André Breton, *Entretiens 1913-1952*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1952), p. 91. Breton defined Surrealism as a technique: "pure psychic automatism by which we will express . . . the true workings of mind." See Breton and Soupault, *Les champs magnétiques (1919)*, *op. cit.* This contradicts the 1924 manifesto, where Breton insisted "that future surrealist techniques do not interest me." See André Breton, "Manifeste du Surréalisme (1924)," in *Manifestes du surréalisme* (Paris: France Loisirs, 1990), pp. 73-70.

57. Thus, *La glace sans tain* was written at "v" speed, very quickly, but still allowing the writer to develop themes coherently; v/3 was a quicker speed that forced writers to shed thematic coherence while allowing for the recall of formative thoughts. At vii speed — the fastest — writing completely escaped the writers' control. See Aude Préta-de-Beaufort, *Le surréalisme*, in Bernand Valette, ed., *Thèmes & Études* (Paris: Ellipses, 1997).

58. In 1923, Breton and others left for a *déambulation* of a few days from Blois, a town chosen at random. To interrogate matter, bring opposites together, and provoke poetic sparks, Max Ernst worked on *frottages* and collages, and Man Ray invented "rayograms." See Breton and Soupault, *Les champs magnétiques (1919)*, *op. cit.*, p. 76. In like spirit, Dali defended "critical paranoia" as a means to produce irreclaimable "second images of reality," and Marcel Duchamps worked with decontextualized ready-made objects (his *urinoir* is the model of the genre). See Sarane Alexandrian, *Max Ernst*, in Jean Saccet, ed., *La septième face du dé* (Paris: Éditions Filipacchi, n.d.); Max Ernst, "Qu'est-ce que le surréalisme? (1934)," in Max Ernst, ed., *Écritures* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), pp. 228-234.

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Struggling against modernity, the Situationist International was aware of the difficulty of maintaining creative dynamism, and wanted to discover forms of organization and activity more effective than "slapstick anarchy."[59] It was defined by technique even more than the Surrealists. Specifically, it worked on *détournements* ("putting artistic elements to new uses in different contexts") and *dérives* ("a technical mode of behaviour tied to the specific conditions of urban life").[60]

Guy Debord's *Société du spectacle* — a founding document of the Situationist International — is a good example of *détournement*. Opening with a play on the first sentence of *Capital* ("the whole life of societies where modern conditions of production appear as an immense accumulation of spectacles"), Debord follows with a late-modern variation on the first sentence of the *Manifesto*'s most lyrical passage ("all that was lived has become a representation"), used again throughout the book to punctuate the analysis.[61] More purposeful than Surrealist *déambulations* and weary of the deadening compartmentalization of urban cadasters, *dérives* were both exercises in territorial reconnaissance and experimental struggles in culture. Willfully ignoring their usual reasons for moving about the city, participants in *dérives* followed scattered solicitations from ambient architecture, in tune with the creative unity of the city. Like *écriture automatique*, *dérives* were meticulously recorded ludic affairs.[62]

Thus, through vivifying onomatopoeia, random and automatic writing, *détournement* and *dérives*, the historical avant-garde opened up "zones of intense life" "in which 'multiplied' man — having surpassed

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59. Christopher Gray, "Essays from Leaving the 20th century," in Stuart Home, ed., *What is Situationism? A Reader* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 1996), pp. 3-23.

60. The best example of the former is the Situationist International's eponymous journal: a rich collection of montage/collage work, including such *détournements* as "reworked advertisements, comic strips, newspaper photographs, problematic description of scantily clad women, illustrations from industrial manuals, graphs, and so forth." See Thomas Y. Levin, "Dismantling the Spectacle: The Cinema of Guy Debord," in Elisabeth Sussman, ed., *On the Passage of a Few People Through . . ., op. cit.*, p. 74. Animating the journal were cartoons in which everyday thoughts burst through the plastic surface of the spectacle. See E. S., "Réforme et contre-réforme dans le pouvoir bureaucratique," in *Internationale Situationniste* (September 1969), 35-43.

61. In like spirit were Asger Jorn's *peintures détournées*, Debord's interrupted and all but invisible films (broken up and withdrawn from circulation by Debord himself), and Constant's *maquettes* for a New Babylon that used urbanist techniques not to control circulation, but to create traversable cities. See Troels Andersen, "Asger Jorn and the Situationist International," in *On the Passage of a Few People . . ., op. cit.*

62. See, for instance, Guy-Ernest Debord, "Two Accounts of the Dérive," in *On the Passage of a Few People . . ., op. cit.*, pp. 135-142.

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the limits of nature — [could] meet the challenges of modern reality."[63] This is the end of, and the reason for the process of creation: total, unalienated experiences — the negation of the negation.[64]

To Create

The historical avant-garde infused zones of intense life with new meaning. Futurist poems were loaded with neologisms and aphorims, and futurist paintings and music brought the whole world in.[65] Futurist dishes were similarly overcharged.[66] Futurist experiences were moments of unity between "what one remembers" and "what one sees" — the dream world and the sensual world.[67] In like spirit, Dada performances were overloaded with "noises, colours and spiritual rythms,"[68] "with all the sensational screams and feverish excitement of its audacious everyday psyche and the entirety of its brutal reality." They too were synthetical moments out of which something new could be born: *l'homme approximatif* — an absolutely unalienated being, never content, never fixed, ever vital, ever capable of revolt.[69]

Less wildly charged than Futurist or Dada experiments, somewhat regularized by technique and more concerned with the transformation of everyday life, surrealist moments were also occasions for the reconciliation (or even the annulment) of opposites: life, death, what is real and what is imagined, the past and the future, up and down, Rimbaud's desire to change life and Marx's will to change the world. Conjunctional synthesis

63. Cinzia Sartini Blum, *The Other Modernism: F. T. Marinetti's Futurist Fiction of Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

64. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Questions de méthode (1960)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986).

65. *Mafarka* — the first Futurist novel — was everything at once. "Like our own soul, it is polyphonic . . . it is a lyrical chant, an epic, an adventure novel and a drama." Born "without the concurrence and foul complicity of a woman's womb,'' Mafarka was the embodiment of the Futurist *superoumo*, "an armoured, hypervirile, omnipotent hero, who rises to the sky while an explosion of apocalyptic forces destroys Mother Earth." See F. T. Marinetti, *Mafarka le Futuriste (1910)*, in Gérard-George Lemaire, ed., *Les derniers mots* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1984); and Blum, *The Other Modernism, op.cit., p.* 57:

66. Thus, Futurist *canapés* contained "ten, twenty flavours to be tasted in a few seconds." *The Timbale of Tomorrow* was a sort of appetizer "composed of the head of a newborn calf, miserable and disconcerted, in the middle of a superabundance of pineapples, nuts and dates . . . carefully stuffed with anchovies so that out of this innocent head, out of these pineapples and African fruits with the added complexity of fish, a sort of pudding was born that left every esophagus choked with admiration." See F. T. Marinetti, *The Futurist Cookbook*, *op. cit.*

67. Boccioni *et al.*, "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters," *op.cit.*

68. Tzara *et al.*, *op. cit.*

69. Tison-Braun, *Tristan Tzara . . ., op. cit.*

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of opposites, everyday love, awake dreams, and *l'humour noir* were considered by Surrealists to be the highest achievements of human civilization, moments of the marvelous, the time of pure men, "of words floating in the air, of ecstasies, of illusions, of blasphemes and dreamy love."[70]

Still more deliberately steered by techniques and closer to everyday life, Situationnist *détournements* and *dérives* were also synthetical moments. Using a key Sartrean concept, the Situationist International wrote of unitary moments of total participation, situations "both lived and lived beyond," against the false unity of the spectacle.[71]

This, then, is what the historical avant-garde created: small incisive moments, critically charged with "intoxicating-immediate life intensity," absolutely un-reified and thoroughly modern. Subjective experiences of the whole, avant-garde moments were pinnacles of possibilities from which incredible hypotheses could be formulated: "what form do you suppose a life would take that was determined at a decisive moment precisely by the street song on everyone's lips?"[72] This is a better beginning point — heuristically as well as politically — for thinking about what might be born of the present moment.

The Relevance of Avant-Garde Experiences

To gather fragments of transnational practices and place them besides what the avant-garde did is to rub sewing machines and umbrellas to provoke a spark.[73] Never less helpful in politics than in poetry, sparks are needed in analyzing global social relations, and to animate thinking stultified by cosmopolitan ideology. Against purposeful partnerships and global instrumentalities, against the lure of civic consensus, duty-bound citizenship and romantic superstitions about the political worth of spectral and pedestalled humanities, the avant-garde encourages thinking about the moment of creation. Reasoning from avant-garde concerns and experiences provides the tools to examine the contradictions of the world

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70. André Breton, cited from the "Second manifeste"' *op. cit.*, On *l'humour noir* as "a superior revolt of the mind," see André Breton, *Anthologie de l'Humour Noir* (Paris: Éditions du Saggitaire, 1940).

71. See Anselm Jappe, *Guy Debord, op.cit.*.

72. Walter Benjamin, *One Way Street and Other Writings*, cited in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, *op. cit.*, p. xlv.

73. The phrase is from Lautréamont's *Les chants de Maldoror*. It was often borrowed by Breton to explain surrealist techniques. Quoted from Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

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economy, and to distinguish between those trying to build even more distant orders and those who are inventing new ways of life and struggle.

Institutions created by the World Bank *et al.* to constitute proper citizens and to prescribe "how they have to behave to get what they want" are of the first kind.[74] These institutions generate "global governance" — social and political regulations for the world economy — and are the most alienating. The making of governance begins with severing politics from social contexts, while restricting possibilities to what is relevant to the production of transposable solutions.[75] How these two processes work can be seen by examining the ESSDN's framework for Social Assessment (one of many points of contact between circumstantial life and the machinery of governance). Social assessment begins with a simulation, where participants are asked to reason from atomized positions. Thus, in designing "A Social Assessment for a Historic City Rehabilitation Project" in Fez, World Bank operatives stipulated the following roles for participants: an industrial tanner, a trash collector, an absentee landlord, a governor, an elderly woman, a resident of the oldest quarter in the old city, the director-general of the Association for the Conservation of Fez, and a social scientist.[76]

As parts of a policy-minded whole, participants argue problem-solving positions. In the process, they define apolitical solutions that will later become incorporated by World Bank operatives and local stakeholders into social compromises. Where there are political institutions, they are brought into the process as the most efficient brokers of that compromise; when there are not, they are created for the purpose.[77] Never whole, except when fulfilling appointed duties, held to purpose and efficiency, this aggregation of people is as far as possible from real ones. As such, it becomes a strategic example of decontextualization.

The severing of the political order from the social context and the shrinking of possibilities are also evident in global summitry. Thus, Habitat II (Istanbul, June 1996) was the culmination of a process that began in 1990 when the United Nations Center for Human Settlements (UNCHS) and the World Bank established a joint "Housing Indicators Program" in order to create a "solid analytical, empirical and institutional base" for

74. World Bank, *The World Bank Participation Sourcebook*, *op.cit.*,

75. Patrick Geddes has called them the "changeful weft of life." See Patrick Geddes, "The Survey of Cities," in *Sociological Review* (January 1998), p. 2.

76. Rietbergen-McCraken, *Participation and Social Assessment*, *op. cit.*

77. The World Bank Participation Sourcebook is filled with examples of the World Bank not only defining relevant stakeholders, but also creating "civil society institutions" for them.

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housing policy.[78] Twenty-five key indicators were regrouped under 5 headings that emphasized the political intent of governance: political commitment to shelter, definition of national shelter objectives, re-organization of the shelter sector, mobilization and allocation of financial resources, shelter production and improvement. Fifty-two cities were compared. A year later, these indicators were combined into an "Enabling Index" used to conduct an extensive survey, and to rank cities on a global scale.[79] In March 1994, the UNCHS launched the "Habitat Indicators Program" to measure the performance of a city, and to test, collect, and analyze "indicators around the world."[80] In 1995, it introduced a "Global Urban Indicators Database," fed by collaborators from 237 cities in 110 countries. To enlighten global public opinion, the "Global Urban Indicators Database" was put on the Web and made searchable, with a set of 50 key data entries in a spreadsheet form (in Excel and Lotus), together with definitions and methods for compilation.

In preparation for Habitat II, "Best Practices" were invented to identify political arrangements replicable "in other cities and countries" with similar problems.[81] In 1995, the International Conference on "Best Practices in Improving Living Environments" (Dubai) endorsed 25 "new and innovative ways to solve" urban problems.[82] Among criteria used to select sanctioned behavior were: sustainability and the formation of lasting partnerships between governments, community organizations, the private sector and international agencies. Afterwards, ways to reduce favelization in Rio de Janeiro became ways to solve squatting in "megacities" everywhere, and local practices in Chattanooga (Tennessee) or Curitaba (Brazil) became models of global civic behavior.

In April 1998, the World Bank sponsored an installation by the

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78. UNCHS, *An Urbanizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements 1996* (Oxford/Nairobi: Oxford University Press/United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, 1996).

79. The focus was explicitly on political adjustment and on measuring "the degree to which the policy and institutional context is judged to facilitate the activities of actors in the housing sector." See OECD, "Better Understanding Our Cities; The Role of Urban Indicators" (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1997), p. 37.

80. *Ibid,* p. 38.

81. Alcira Kreimer, *et al.*, "Rio de Janeiro — In Search of Sustainability," in *Towards A Sustainable Urban Environment: the Rio de Janiero Study*, ed. by Alcira Kreimer, *et al.*, *World Bank Discussion Papers* (Washington: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1995), pp. 3-32.

82. UNDP, "Habitat II: City Summits to Forge the Future of Human Settlements in an Urbanizing World," *UN Chronicle* (Spring 1996), pp. 40-48.

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"Adventist Development Relief Agency" (ADRA) that was displayed on the Mall in Washington D.C. It is one of the most striking examples of global governance. Gathered "for the benefit of schoolchildren" were ten "Global Village Habitat." Introduced as "life-sized re-creation of 10 habitats portraying how people live in different parts of the world," the collection contained such archetypal habitats as the "Stilt House," the "Refugee Camp," the "Favela," the "Tenement" and the "Homeless Environment.[83] There is no more eloquent example of a generic humanity abstracted from context and compartementalized.

Markedly different is the heterogenous humanity that gathers in anti-summit protests. By political standards, the incohate crowds that gathered in Seattle, Prague, and elsewhere belong to a lesser whole than the *Manifesto*'s immaculate proletariat, on whose behalf the Comintern enforced programmatic coherence. Enfettered in corporatist struggles, narrowly focused on tactical matters (how to block that street or climb that pole, how to be seen and heard, where to converge), unable to articulate even a hint of "an institutional vision, much less a compelling, well-worked-out formulation that could inform strategy," or to indicate what they are "fighting for" and what they "care about," they are readily dismissed.[84] In light of avant-garde experiences, however, summit protests become more significant, both for the coherence of their ways and for the manner in which they transmit everyday concerns to the world economic elite.

About the coherence of summit protests, it is indeed remarkable that, less than a decade after the birth of the PGA in Geneva, and only three years after N30 (thus in about the time it took the IWMA to ratify its provisional rules), protests have grown their own relatively coherent aesthetics, best described using words of carnival, festival, and rave (or avant-garde language of "collective daydreams" and "large-scale coincidences."[85]

Summit protests have also become relatively coherent events from a tactical viewpoint.[86] In all protests, "affinity groups" (echoes of Spanish

83. See ADRA's "Global Village Site," housed on the World Bank's server, at <http://www.worldbank.org/html/extdr/gvillage/default.htm>

84. Z staff, "This Yawning Emptiness," in *Z* (June 2000), pp. 4-5.

85. Naomi Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), p. 313. For the coherence of this aesthetics, see Roger Cohen's report, published in anticipation of S26: "Growing Up and Getting Practical Since Seattle," in *The New York Times* (September 24, 2000), Week in Review.

86. So coherent have tactics become that they could be detailed by the Canadian Security forces in a report prepared in anticipation of the Summit of the Americas in Québec City. See Canadian Security Intelligence Service, *Anti-Globalization — A Spreading Phenomenon* (Ottawa: CSIS, 2000).

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anarchism) schooled in civil disobedience and increasingly knowledgeable of ways to cope with teargas and pepper spray operate in the perimeter of the main summit locations, where globalizing *élites* gather.[87] Intent on blocking entrances or disrupting circulation, these protesters also make contact with police forces, with varying results: in Seattle and London, security forces simply contained them; in Washington, the riot police did not let them set up; in Prague, they were met with armoured vehicles, water canons, and three rows of helmeted policemen, armed "like Samouraïs, with gas masks and Plexiglas shields."[88] Circulating among affinity groups to close gaps or enliven quiescent places and to confront forcibly security forces are the "Black Blocks" of anarchists (2,000 in Washington — probably the largest anarchist gathering of the post-war period). Further from global *élites*, Independent Media Centers link protesters with the media, as well as with protesters elsewhere. When protests are over, "they leave virtually no trace behind, save for an archived website."[89]

Informing these practices are technically-minded organizations similar to Dada's "Revolutionary Central Committee," the *Bureau de recherches surréalistes* or the Situationist International's *Bureau de recherches pour un urbanisme unitaire*: the Ruckus Society,[90] "Reclaim the Streets,"[91] Co- Motion Action (1998), the Direct Action Network (1998), the Global Autonomy Network (1998), etc.[92]

Transnational campaigns too have become regularized, and they too have brought everyday concerns into the sphere of the world economy.

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87. About affinity groups in the Spanish Anarchist movement before the Civil War, see Murray Bookchin, *The Spanish Anarchists: the Heroic Years, 1868-1936* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).

88. Robert Belleret and Martin Plichta, "Des heurts violents marquent la journée de protestation contre la mondialisation à Prague," in *Le Monde* (September 28, 2000), p. 5.

89. Klein, "The Vision Thing," *op. cit.*,

90. Created in 1995, the Ruckus Society holds "Action Camps" to train people in non-violent civil disobedience, and publishes training manuals on dealing with the media and ways to climb urban structures.

91. Also created in 1995, "Reclaim the Streets" also organizes training camps on civil disobedience and ways to build road blocks and avoid media marginalization.

92. Part of summit politics since Seattle, Independent Media Centers are principally concerned with tactical matters coordinatng "coverage among teams of independent video, still camera, print and audio journalists coming from around the world," documenting "direct actions, discussion of economic alternatives to globalization, and progressive analysis by under-represented voices," producing "audio, print, and video documents for distribution," distributing "productions via website-based streaming and indexed archives," delivering material "to global mainstream media via web push, computer faxing and e-mail," strengthening and linking "existing networks of alternative media and community organizations to maximize the impact of their message."

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In all campaigns cited in the first part of this article, local groups moved by tactical necessities, ventured unto the world economy looking for kin groups to exchange with and draw from, and to build protective social relations. Giving coherence and continuity to these efforts is a indefinite *nébuleuse* of relatively new transnational organizations. Among those relevant to campaigns mentioned above are: the Asia Pacific Workers Solidarity Links (1982), the Coalition for Justice in the Maquilladora (1991), Mujer a Mujer (1987), La Mujer Obrera (1985), the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (1994), and the Asian Womens' Worker Center (1983). Pacific-Asia Resource Center (1973), Asia Monitor Resources Center (n.d.), Women's International Information and Communication Service (1974), Transnational Information Exchange (1979), Maquilla Solidarity Network (1995). Tactically-minded, forced by the exigencies of struggles to develop what Lewis Mumford would have recognized as the "flexibility and inventiveness of the amateur," they too are kin to avant-garde committees.

Through their tactics, these organizations generate intense activities to meet the challenge of the imposed purpusefulness of government. While summit protests lasted, Seattle and London were not just the home to Boeing and Microsoft, or financial hubs, but temporary locations of festivals and carnivals — a sovereignty defiant of the civic purposefulness of government. Less spectacularly, transnational campaigns have also been animated by the intensity of contextualized struggles.[93] Marginally located at the periphery of the world order, summit protests are organizing intense social forces carrying their undigested lot of concerns and recriminations. Unlike grand absentee subjects dear to cosmopolitan ideologues, these are not held together by shared allegiances to political programs, but by contextualized necessities.

93. Thus, the Ravenswood campaign was rooted in "a powerful sense of place" growing out of long-standing ties between workers and the community (the average striking worker had 24 years experience at the plant). Strengthened by community support, local pickets endured long enough for the transnational campaign to be effective. In turn, the transnational campaign strengthened community resolve and broadened the local social basis of the strike. In the end, the connection between the local strike and the transnational campaign strengthened both, and the Ravenswood struggle became at once broader and more rooted. In like manner, the campaign against regional integration in the Americas did not transcend national contexts, but was actually constitutive of it. In Canada and Mexico, the anti- NAFTA campaign gave impetus to coalition politics and organizations that were key to the struggle against NAFTA. The Action Canada Network and the Red Mexicana de Accion Frente Libre Comercio also served as anchoring points at the local and national level.

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Here are the end and the reasons of anti-summit protests and transnaional campaigns: to generate contextualized yet global experiences, both lived and lived beyond. Born of, and tied to actually-existing struggles, and creative of resistance communities (both as near as their point of origin [think of BS/FS 'Camp Justice' and GAP pickets] and as far from it [think PGA-inspired events in Hyderabad, Seville or Montréal]), such transnational events are the very heart of a dialectics of presence in the world economy. Traversed by the multiple, unresolved, and contingent issues of everyday life, these moments let us glimpse humanity and can be both an articulating subject and an historically-contingent, situated object.

By contrast, the many committees, agencies, and learning and working groups set up by global regulatory agencies in their attempt to "mainstream" and "upstream" social participation only have reason as instrumental, dedicated organizations. Rather than birthing places of a new and indefinite, transnational subject, they are the ground-zero of decontextualization, where experience begins to be impoverished beyond politics.

Conclusion

Disdainful of purposeful discipline, romantically bound to the primitive and the authentic, and self-referential, the historical avant-garde seems irrelevant to politics. Faced with the exigencies of *Realpolitik*, it either did very little or resorted to the most authoritarian defense of its own impunity. Appolinaire, who defined surrealism, became a soldier; Marinetti, who had been an anarchist, who invented the "Excitorum" (not a senate to moderate politics, but a gathering of young people to excite it), became a founding member of the Accademia D'Italia and let his poetry merge with fascist ideology; Tzara, who had dared to call for "the international revolutionary alliance of all creative and intellectual peoples in the entire world based on radical communism," became a Stalinist; Breton joined the French Communist Party, left it, and shrank into aestheticism; the Situationist International, "which in receiving its movement from the revolutionary impulse of the entire world, precipitates . . . the radical turn of events," dissolved into internal bickering and quickly disbanded after May 1968 — the moment of its greatest relevance. Afterwards, Situ thinking degenerated into paranoid fantasies.[94]

Of course, Rimbaud and Marx cannot be easily reconciled. Yet, to move beyond cosmopolitan accommodation, thinking has to be rooted in

94. Russell Berman, David Pan and Paul Piccone, "The Society of the Spectacle *20 Years Later: A Discussion*," in *Telos* 86, (Winter 1990-1991), pp. 81-102.

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a radical concept of freedom and a sense of infinite possibilities. Sometimes a tiny glimmer, sometimes profane illumination, the historical avant-garde did define such a concept and, in a critical moment when global neo-liberalism has not yet dug trenches in society, it does inform thinking about where significant experiences are taking place.

The recalling of the concerns and experiences of the avant-garde raises an incredible, yet realistic hypothesis: this could be the beginning of revolutionary ferment; a time of great excited crowds not yet streamed into a single track or regimented into global growth machines.[95] This may be the beginning of a new moment in history, shaped by a radically new humanity, never content, never fixed, ever vital, and unwilling to be manipulated by global *élites*.

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95. Raymond Williams, "The Politics of the Avant-garde," in *Raymond Williams: The Politics of Modernism*, ed. by Tony Pikney (London: Verso, 1961), pp. 49-64.

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Dialectic of Enlightenment *as Genealogy Critique*

Roger Foster

Jürgen Habermas has argued that, in condemning rationality while using rational argument, the authors of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* are guilty of a "performative contradiction."[1] Allegedly, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* represents a totalization of ideology critique. Reason turns back on itself, casting suspicion over the very rational criteria which had previously done the ideological unmasking. Habermas has also suggested that Horkheimer and Adorno make the critique of reification unworkable, by projecting it "back behind the capitalist beginnings of the modern age into the very beginnings of hominization."[2] Accordingly, Horkheimer and Adorno no longer see capitalist society as the ground of reification. It is rather instrumental reason that is the basis of reified consciousness, and this is generalized both temporally (to apply to the entire history of the species) and substantively (to apply to cognition in the service of self-preservation and the repression of instinctual nature).

Although the charge of performative contradiction can be defused while remaining within the bounds of Habermas' interpretation of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, the real reasons why this critique fails lie deeper. This becomes clear if *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is seen as

1. Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Vol. 1, tr. by Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), pp. 106-130. For critiques which explicitly challenge the ascription of a performative contradiction to *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, see A. T. Nuyen, "Habermas, Adorno and the Possibility of Immanent Critique," in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 3 (1992), and Martin Morris "On the Logic of the Performative Contradiction," *Review of Politics*, Vol. 58, No. 4 (1996).

2. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Vol. 1, *ibid.*, p. 366.

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genealogy critique. Genealogy is a form of critique which uses historical analysis to undermine the ideological self-understanding of dominant thought structures. Historical analysis is employed to uncover needs and interests central to the formation of thought systems, but forgotten or repressed when that system becomes dominant. Horkheimer and Adorno use genealogy to criticize a positivist variant of rational thinking that defines itself as rational thinking *as such*. Here cognition takes the form of a classification of facts within mathematized formulas, which serves productivity through increased control over natural processes.[3] Horkheimer and Adorno understand positivism as the philosophical expression of that structure of knowledge concerned with the technically useful. By means of genealogy, they criticize the positivist version of the Enlightenment, and not reason as such. The purpose this critique is to uncover alternative possibilities of rational thinking, which are suppressed by the positivist definition of reason.

Horkheimer and Adorno develop this genealogy critique by modifying the cultural anthropology deployed by Freud in *Totem and Taboo*. In this work, Freud constructs an interpretation of "primitive" thought organized around psychoanalytic categories. Animistic beliefs, Freud argues, derive from the cultural equivalent of that psychic process which, at the individual level, gives rise to obsessional neurosis. Freud is thus able to dispense with the view of early ethnologists that animism is a result of intellectual error, and also with the Durkheimian view that animism represents a hypostatization of social forces. Horkheimer and Adorno modify Freud's account by arguing that animism and mythic thought systems in general originate in a primordial fear of the unknown. The positivist Enlightenment can then be revealed by genealogy critique as a culturally sublimated expression of primordial fear. On this basis, they are able to uncover the contingent, non-rational origins of the restriction of thought to the technically useful. Before developing this argument, it is necessary to show how the genealogy critique deployed in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* emerged as a response to the problematic of "cultural reification," which they had taken over from the early sociologists *via* Georg Lukács. What was threatened by cultural reification was the capacity of symbolic forms to articulate critical experience, i.e., those experiences in which the social world shows up as structured by tensions, antagonisms, and contradictions.

3. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, tr. by John Cumming (London: Verso, 1979), p. 4. This translation has been modified where necessary.

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The Problem of Cultural Reification

The Critical Theory of early Frankfurt School theorists was informed by two major critical traditions, i.e., the Marxist critique of domination, and the analysis of the pathologies stemming from capitalist modernization, as articulated by classical social theory. Critical theorists took over that defining unity of the critique of domination within Marxism, which can best be described as the conjunction of a science of domination and a logic of emancipation.[4] Crudely put, the Marxian view holds that the analysis of structures of domination allows the identification of that normative perspective within the present which is brought to bear in revolutionary activity. For Marx, these components were joined by means of the concept of labor, which was both the source of alienation and reification, and the ground of that potential of self-development which was to be set free by revolutionary activity. The connection with the Marxian critique, then, meant that Frankfurt School theorists were committed to the articulation of a critical perspective that, at the same time, attempts to identify the social location for the normative perspective underlying this critique.

A second major influence on Frankfurt School theorists, however, can be found in the work of the early sociologists. These thinkers, influenced more by Nietzsche than by Marx, theorized typical pathologies emerging in the transition from "traditional" to "modern" societies — or what Ferdinand Tönnies described as the transition from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*.[5] Rather than focusing on domination and social struggle, they were preoccupied with the perceived loss of objective structures of moral meaning — whether in Weber's account of the "iron cage," which theorized the loss of the religious-metaphysical background to social practice; in Durkheim's account of "anomie"; or in Tönnies' reading of the weakening of the bonds of *Gemeinschaft*.[6] In all these cases, modern societies were seen as afflicted by problems of (moral) disintegration. Unlike the early sociologists, however, Frankfurt School theorists were not concerned with the problem of disintegration in the context of the breakdown of the binding structures of the traditional order. Rather, they saw this disintegration

4. See Axel Honneth, "Domination and Moral Struggle," in his *The Fragmented World of the Social* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995).

5. Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchgesellschaft, 1963). As in the case of the Marxist critique, the influence of these early sociologists was also filtered through Lukács, whose social thought represented an exemplary synthesis of Marx and Weber.

6. Another important figure in this group is Georg Simmel, whose *Philosophie des Geldes* (Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 1989) shows a significant Nietzschean influence.

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in terms of the loss of access to the symbolic tools of critique.

In order to understand this transformation, it is necessary to grasp how Frankfurt School theorists transplanted Marxian insights into the debate concerning cultural meaning. This led them to criticize the view that the frameworks of moral meaning, which the early sociologists saw as under threat, were to be theorized as expressive of social solidarity or moral consensus. Rather, they argued, the conflicts which dirempt the social body would find their counterpart at the level of meaning in the form of symbolic tensions or "contradictions" harboring unrealized or suppressed possibilities — unfulfilled demands embodying that context-transcendent force which makes possible a critical experience of the social order. In short, the moral meanings that the early sociologists had theorized as the guarantors of social cohesion were seen instead as allowing critical insight into the oppressive structures of the social world in which they emerged.

"First generation" Frankfurt School theorists tended to speak of this critical potential of symbolic forms in terms of "determinate negations."[7] The most fundamental normative categories of the present order — "justice," "equality," "democracy," etc. — contain a transcendent dimension: their fulfilment "demands" rejection of the existing order. Thus, *contra* a reductivist theory of ideology, the normative categories integral to the self-understanding of modern capitalist societies are not just pure semblance. Through their internal meaningfulness, they express the conflicts of this social order in the form of a demand for their negation. On the basis of this reading, Frankfurt School theorists are able to theorize the problem of disintegration as the rigidification of meanings, in which the ends of reason lose their capacity to function as the immanent negation of social antagonisms, and thus lose their critical, context-transcending force.

This focus on the loss of a location for the critical potential of reason was not entirely foreign to the early sociologists. In fact, Weber's notion of the force of the "extraordinary" attached to charismatic authority and Durkheim's description of "collective effervescence"[8] can both be seen as

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7. See, e.g., Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (New York: Continuum, 1974), p. 36, and Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialektik* (Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 1966), p. 230. In the latter work, *bestimmt* is translated as "definite," thereby obscuring the Hegelian origins of the phrase "*bestimmte Negation*."

8. Both terms refer to an extreme form of self-distanciation from ordinary experience: individuals are transported beyond themselves. See Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1980), pp. 140-2; and Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, tr. by Karen E. Fields (New York: The Free Press, 1995), pp. 218-20.

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standing for the accessibility of normative transcendence as part of social experience. The germs of a theory concerned with a suppression of the critical possibilities of meaning are already present in the Weberian account of the "waning" of charisma, and in Durkheim's account of the "dying" of former gods and the call for new forms of collective creativity. The distinctive contribution of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is to provide an analysis of the problem of disintegration through a genealogical critique. The task then becomes one of identifying that distinctive event within social development responsible for the pathologies of moral meaning identified by classical social theory. Genealogy sets out to uncover that turning point responsible for the experiential inaccessibility of the transcendent force attached to normative categories. As with all forms of genealogical critique, the main objective is to undermine the self-definition of the present dominant thought system (in this case, positivist Enlightenment) as the necessary and exclusive form of rational thinking.

Weber and Lukács on Cultural Reification

Two factors were responsible for the transformation of early Critical Theory from an interdisciplinary research program to genealogy critique. In the first place, power was perceived as becoming ever more pervasive and mediated in 20th century capitalism. Thus, the objective of deriving these mediated forms exclusively from the economic structure was becoming increasingly problematic. Secondly, and here the influence of the early sociologists was central, cultural rationalization was seen to be eroding the accessibility of the context-transcending force of symbolic forms. Ideals such as "freedom" and "justice" were thus no longer able to provide the basis for a negative evaluation of the present social order. In terms of "determinate negation," this meant that the central normative concepts identified with this social order were no longer able to identify its essence as its "becoming"; normative concepts became purely descriptive and no longer able to articulate the inherent tensions of present society. Normative terms, therefore, were no longer able to "point beyond" the present order by showing the failure of this order to realize the possibilities inherent in its ideals. Symbolic frameworks were thus ideologically constricted and incapable of identifying the present order in the context of its unrealized possibilities. This insight is the basis of Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of positivist Enlightenment.

The first intimation of a conjunction of these two problems, i.e., the increasing pervasiveness of power and the loss of a cultural location for

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transcendent meaning, can be found in Weber's account of institutional power. He argued that bureaucratic authority was an "authority in virtue of [the possession of] knowledge," a type of authority integrally linked to cultural rationalization.[9] If bureaucratic domination seemed to be the rational form of administration, a rationally organized socialist society would also have to be ordered that way. This seemed to necessitate pulling the critique of domination free from an exclusive focus on economic structures. However, from the standpoint of Critical Theory, what is most significant about Weber's reading of modernity is that it provides the perspective for a reading of cultural rationalization as both disenchantment, in which the illusion of a cosmological sense is extinguished, and as creating the basis for an extension of institutional coercion.[10] Both ideas are united in Weber's description of the "waning" of charismatic authority.[11] Here he argues that, in the course of cultural rationalization, charismatic authority becomes objectified as cultural discipline, and thus forms the subjective basis for unquestioning obedience to bureaucratic authority. Thus, the waning of charismatic authority constitutes a "decline of the extent of influence of individual action."[12] The rationalization of the political and economic procurement of needs proceeds together with the "unstoppable expansion of discipline as a universal appearance, and increasingly limits the significance of charisma and of individually differentiated action."[13] Weber is able to theorize a new "impersonal" domination that arises through cultural rationalization. This is a structure of discipline, which is all that remains of the bond to innovative charismatic leaders. This is what lies behind Weber's depiction of the fate of ascetic Protestantism in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. The reference to modern subjects of rational discipline as "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart" suggests that what is left behind after the charismatic phase of Puritanism is strict obedience.[14]

There is a further aspect to Weber's depiction of the waning of charisma, however, which is vital for understanding why the form that cultural rationalization had taken in Western societies became a problem for

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9. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, *op. cit.*, p. 129.
10. See Jeffrey Alexander, *Structure and Meaning: Rethinking Classical Sociology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 79.
11. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, *op. cit.*, pp. 681-687.
12. *Ibid*, p. 681.
13. *Ibid*, p. 687.
14. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, tr. by Talcott Parsons (London: Unwin, 1930), p. 182. See also Alexander, *Structure and* Meaning, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

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Critical Theory. Weber distinguishes charisma from other forms of authority by contraposing the "extraordinary" and the "ordinary." Charisma constitutes the "specifically 'creative' revolutionary force of history." Charismatic authority is capable of precipitating a radical transformation — a *metanoia* — of convictions and beliefs, and thus represents the "internal subordination under what is not yet present, the absolutely unique, thus holy."[15] Charisma is a type of meaning revelation that answers to those needs and hopes which cannot be adequately satisfied within everyday authority.[16] This suggests that Weber reads cultural rationalization as bringing forth a rational discipline that displaces or suppresses the creative force of the extraordinary, which was maintained in the meaning revelation unique to charismatic authority. This argument was applied by Horkheimer and Adorno in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* to the positivist Enlightenment. They reinterpret the loss of the extraordinary force of charismatic authority as a suppression of the possibility of a critical experience of everyday life, due to the dominance of a positivist mentality that restricts thinking to the ordering of facts. They root this critical experience in the dialectical nature of language. For them, the positivist mentality threatens the charismatic quality attached to reason — its ability to reveal an idealized future in an immanent, negative presentation of the present. Horkheimer and Adorno take up the idea of a potentially distorting process of "objectification," or what Weber also refers to as the *Veralltäglichung* (becoming ordinary), of a certain creative force in the course of cultural rationalization. Rather than seeing this from the standpoint of Weber's pessimistic diagnosis, however, Horkheimer and Adorno attempt to trace the historical roots of the suppression of reason's context-transcending force, in order to reveal both its contingency and its entwinement with dominant social interests.

In "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat," Lukács attempts to join the Marxian critique of political economy with Weber's sociology in such a way that the critique of capitalist society can be fused with a critique of rationalization. Lukács' essay turns Marx's economic analysis into social theory by posing the question of the consequences of the universalization of commodity exchange. How far, he asks, is commodity exchange able to influence the "*total* inner and outer

15. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, *op. cit.*, p. 658.

16. See Wolfgang Schluchter, *Die Entstehung des modernen Rationalismus: Eine Analyse von Max Webers Entwicklungsgeschichte des Okzidents* (Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 1998), p. 247.

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life of society?"[17] The deformation of rationality appears to be a process of commodification. Just as the appearance of objects in economic exchange destroys their qualitative character, i.e., their use value, so, through the rationalization of social life by modern bureaucratic institutions, "all issues are subjected to an increasingly formal and standardized treatment and . . . there is an ever-increasing remoteness from the qualitative essence of the "things" to which bureaucratic activity pertains."[18] Reification, the process by which a relation between people takes on the illusory appearance of objectivity, is the key to understanding how ideology operates in the modern world. The link between the two, however, meant that ideology could no longer be conceived of as a body of subjectively held beliefs, since reification was an aspect of the objective structure of capitalism. Ideology no longer hovers above the world as a set of subjective beliefs. Rather, the object is "distorted in its objectivity" through reification.[19] The flip side of the objectification of ideology was its internalization. Ideology, Lukács claims, comes to sink ever more deeply into human consciousness.[20] It is evident that, shorn of its Hegelian-Marxist theory of class consciousness, Lukács' diagnosis would pose serious problems for the possibility of locating a critical, emancipatory force within society.

Lukács' claim that reification is founded on a "principle of rationalization," on the notion of calculation, clearly hints at that process by which the dialectical workings of language are undermined.[21] Rationalization produces a false opposition between purely formal laws and irrational content, making it unlikely that a theoretical prescription, an "ought," might be able to modify existence. Thus, reality appears to individuals as unchangeable. The solution to this problem is the adoption of the standpoint of praxis, which makes possible a superior understanding of subject and object as involved in a complex process of mediation, in which the critical demands thought makes of its objects appear as the "structural principles and the real tendencies of the objects themselves."[22] The central insight which rendered Lukács' solution problematic, and which would

17. Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, tr. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), p. 84.

18. *Ibid*, p. 99.

19. *Ibid*, p. 93. Also "the commodity structure . . . penetrate[s] society in all its aspects," p. 85.

20. *Ibid*, p. 93. Thus, the proletariat makes its appearance as the "product of the capitalist order," sharing with the bourgoisie the reification of every aspect of its life. (p. 149).

21. *Ibid*, p. 88.

22. *Ibid*, p. 155.

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concern Critical Theory from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* onwards, was that there seemed to be no grounds for positing a direct link between the overcoming of "economic" reification — the adoption of the standpoint of praxis as the conscious transformation of nature through productive activity — and "cultural" reification. Lukács' solution rested on the thesis that the latter can be conceived of as an effect of the former. As Weber's analysis implied, however, the idea that a reified rationality reduced to processes of calculation and emptied of value might recover its fundamental connection to human ends through the abolition of capitalist relations seemed suspect. Horkheimer and Adorno saw that cultural reification had effectively twisted free of its roots in the production process, and had to be analyzed as the effect of an autonomous cultural logic of abstraction. Whereas economic institutions posed the problem of injustice, the consequences of cultural reification were primarily to be seen in terms of a marginalizing or suppressing certain experiences — those in which the social world is revealed negatively. In order to address cultural reification adequately, it would be necessary to break with the base-superstructure schema of orthodox Marxism. The genealogy critique developed in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* attempts to reconstruct the critique of reification on a new basis. This takes the form of a genealogical critique of the positivist Enlightenment because Horkheimer and Adorno see the positivist mentality as the intellectual reflection of the reification pervasive in the social world.

The Turn to Genealogy Critique

In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, genealogy critique is used to undermine the self-understanding of the positivist Enlightenment as the totality of rational knowledge, and to reveal an alternative concept of rational thinking as a *repressed historical possibility* of enlightened thought. The genealogical approach enables Horkheimer and Adorno to deploy the repressed possibilities in the history of positivist Enlightenment as the critical standard with which to judge it. In uncovering the origins of positivist thinking in mythic fear, they attempt to unmask positivist Enlightenment as founded, not on a thirst for knowledge, but on a repression of critical experience in rational thinking. Once its genealogical nature is taken into account, what is wrong with the Habermasian reading of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* becomes clear. Horkheimer and Adorno do not mean to cast a suspicion over rational thinking as such, nor to extend reification back to the beginnings of history. Habermas clearly misreads

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Dialectic of Enlightenment as an attempt to construct an ontological thesis concerning enlightened reason. In fact, genealogy is only intelligible as a self-conscious strategic intervention seeking to write a history of the present that will undermine its self-representation. The purpose of genealogy critique is thus to provide a *distanciating perspective* on the present. The function of history in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is to reveal the present as an object of critical experience, through the very presentation of the dominant structure of rational thinking as founded on a repression of alternative possibilities. The thesis of a "domination of nature" does not seek to generalize cultural reification into a philosophical anthropology. Rather, it attempts to uncover the *contingent, extra-rational origins* of the restriction of thought to the technically useful, through a diagnosis of the act of collective repression that founds the restricted rationality of the positivist Enlightenment.

The self-definition of the positivist Enlightenment comprises a liberation from fear, and the establishment of the sovereignty of human thought. This was assumed to have become possible through the substitution of knowledge for the imaginary representation of mythic thinking.[23] The fear of nature expressed in mythic representations is allegedly overcome by the technical superiority of scientistic thinking, which abolishes the anthropomorphizing of natural processes inherent in myth. It is this self-presentation of the positivist Enlightenment that the genealogy critique of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* seeks to undermine. The hinge of this critique is the well-known dialectical reversal, which states that Enlightenment regresses to myth in the very attempt to separate itself from the mythic. One regularly missed aspect of this argument essential to the critical intention of the whole is that Horkheimer and Adorno want to uncover a *common root* for positivist and mythic thinking, which will reveal the cognitive strategies of myth and positivism as only superficially different responses to the same problem. They want to undermine the positivist representation of the anthropomorphic character of mythic thinking as founded on an error. This argument is derived from a critical encounter with Freud's reading of mythic thinking in *Totem and Taboo*.

Freud had questioned the reading of ethnologists that animistic beliefs were founded on reflection concerning certain natural processes, such as sleep and death, which allegedly provided grounds for the notion of spirits as existing independently of bodies. Primitive human beings, Freud

23. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

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claims, were not "impelled to the creation of their first world system through a purely speculative desire to know."[24] In "Taboo and the Ambivalence of Feelings," he suggests that the projection which defines animism can be traced back to an original psychic conflict involving contradictory feelings of affection and aggression that becomes intense with the death of the object of those feelings.[25] The conflict can only be resolved by the external projection of the desire for the death of the object. Significantly, however, Horkheimer and Adorno explicitly deny that myth originates in projection. The principle of *mana*, which is the origin of animistic beliefs, "is no projection, but the echo of the real supremacy of nature in the weak souls of primitive men."[26] The origin of a spiritual, rather than material component within natural processes does not occur through projection, but is fixed by the "cry of terror" which accompanies the experience of the unknown and unfamiliar. Therefore, from the beginning the animistic system of mythic thought represents "the transcendence of the unknown in relation to the known." Since the unknown is experienced as a frightening superior power, the spiritual-sacred element of transcendence comes to be equated with the "shudder" by which it is identified.[27]

Horkheimer and Adorno trace the elimination of critical experience in mythic and positivist thinking to this original entwinement of the transcendent with fear of the unknown. The genealogy critique of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* undermines the self-understanding of positivist thinking by uncovering the repression underlying the thought structures of both myth and positivist Enlightenment.[28] In order to reconstruct this argument, it is necessary to look in greater depth at the account of the origin of animism. Horkheimer and Adorno trace the origin of symbolism back to the separation of the spiritual and the material that is seen to arise from terror in the face of the unknown. In this, they are close to Weber, who emphasized the role of magic in generating symbolic forms. With the belief system of magic, Weber argues, things and processes can first appear as signs for

24. Sigmund Freud, *Totem und Tabu* (Frankfurt a/M: Fischer Verlag, 1940), p. 89.
25. *Ibid*, p. 73.
26. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
28. For the authors of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, there is no age of "mythic innocence," in relation to which Enlightenment would be a regression, but neither is the relation between the two conceivable as progress from mythic "barbarism." Enlightenment, in its positivist form, is simply an intensified (i.e., culturally sublimated) form of myth. This, of course, leaves open the thought that a "genuine" Enlightenment, free from myth, could emerge through reflection on the possibilities discernible in the historical account of the dialectical entwinement of myth and Enlightenment.

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something else, as emanating from a world of souls, demons and gods, which can only be influenced by symbolic means.[29] For Horkheimer and Adorno, however, what is revealed in this is the *original dialectical nature of language*; "When the tree is no longer approached merely as a tree, but as evidence for an other, as the location of *mana*, language expresses the contradiction that something is itself and at the same time something other than itself, identical and not identical. Through the deity, language is transformed from tautology into language. The concept, which some would define as the sign-unit of whatever is comprised under it, was rather from the beginning the product of dialectical thinking, in which each thing is only what it is, in that it becomes that which it is not."[30]

The notion of concepts as "sign-units" is, of course, the defining feature of positivist thinking. Horkheimer and Adorno suggest that language originally comprised another possibility, i.e., a dialectical deployment of concepts distinct from the technical-instrumental function of cognition engaged in ordering and classifying facts. The dialectical potential of language enables it to identify existent things as possessing immanent possibilities. Each item is understood in terms of the determinations that it acquires through its being cast into an historical process. It is through the meanings and possibilities revealed in this historical process that existing things are able to acquire determinations that "contradict" what they appear to be. The origin of symbolism demonstrates that this potential to "overshoot" the object is an essential component of language.

Having identified this critical possibility, Horkheimer and Adorno needed to pinpoint the grounds of the repression of dialectical thinking in mythical and positivist thought systems. The basis for this argument is the origin of the transcendent in the "cry of terror." Accordingly, the pre- animistic origin of the spiritual other reveals an *ur*-repression of dialectical thinking, which arises from the original identification of the transcendent (i.e., the spiritual other) as a source of *Angst*. Thus, the potential for articulation of the non-identity of things that "overshoots" the existent is stifled (repressed) by a primordial fear of the unknown. The dialectic between concept and object, therefore, "remains impotent to the extent that it develops from the cry of terror which is the duplication, the tautology, of terror itself."[31] This argument locates the primordial structures of the dialectical *and* the ideological forms of language in the emergence of

29. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, *op. cit.*, p. 248.
30. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

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symbolism. The opposition of the material and spiritual, fixed in the encounter with the unknown, enables items to *stand for* something other than themselves, to point beyond themselves, and hence to "overshoot" their existent forms. *Mana*, which is the origin of symbolism, already expresses this transcendent force of language, its capacity to articulate what "transcends the confines of experience; whatever in things is more than their previously familiar existence."[32] Language thus possesses an original dialectical component, in which a thing is identifiable as both "itself and not itself." However, the dialectical component is corrupted from the beginning by the identification of otherness, of outsideness, as a source of *Angst*. The origin of ideology, therefore, lies in a *primordial fear of the unknown*. The origin of the transcendent in a cry of terror sets up from the beginning an ideological barrier to the dialectical deployment of language. The unknown, the otherness or non-identity of the existent, must be repressed in order to quell fear.

On the basis of this interpretation, Horkheimer and Adorno are able to construct an account of both myth and positivist Enlightenment as structures founded on a repression of dialectical experience. The animism of mythic thought objectifies the fear of the unknown in the form of gods and demons. The fear attached to the constructions of animism is not, *pace* Freud, due to the projection of aggression toward the object. Mythical animism, in fact, presupposes this fear — which originates in the pre-animistic encounter with the unknown — and simply *objectifies* it in the form of gods and demons, which are thus the reified form of a primordial fear of what lies outside ordinary experience. Hence, the gods and demons of animism enforce and execute punishment for the transgressions of the order of ordinary experience. They bear the sign of retribution for acts which rupture the order of the everyday world, and establish the unsanctioned and the extraordinary as a prohibition. This, Horkheimer and Adorno argue, is why myths represent the return to immanence. The restoring of immanence in the wake of a transgression of order is represented by myth as the workings of "fate," i.e., an irresistible force that repairs the rupture of ordinary experience.[33]

Mythical animism, however, is unsuccessful in its attempt to quell the fear of the unknown: the gods and demons of myth "bear the petrified sound of fear as their names." It is the attempt to extinguish mythic fear which then determines the Enlightenment's "course of demythologization,"

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 16.

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which "compounds the animate with the inanimate, as myth compounds the inanimate with the animate."[34] The anti-animist strategy of positivist Enlightenment cannot escape from myth because it is impelled by the mythic fear of the unknown. Positivist Enlightenment attempts to abolish mythic fear by removing all traces of animism, since animism can only objectify this fear without freeing human beings of its effects. Thus, the positivist Enlightenment is simply "mythic fear turned radical": it is merely another strategy to quell the fear of the unknown that marked the primordial encounter with the transcendent by constructing a world of "pure immanence." For the positivist Enlightenment as for myth, "nothing at all may remain outside, because the mere representation of outsideness is the source of fear."[35]

This argument grounds Horkheimer's and Adorno's genealogically constructed diagnosis of the positivist Enlightenment. The rejection of dialectical thinking which defines the positivist mentality is seen to derive from the unconscious workings within the positivist Enlightenment of an original prohibition — the imperative not to transgress the order of ordinary experience — which was the origin of mythic fear. The genealogy critique reveals the positivist Enlightenment as founded on a repression of critical experience. Here, Horkheimer and Adorno attempt to apply Freud's reading of taboo as a critical thesis by identifying a type of collective repression that takes shape as a repression of critical experience.

Positivism as Collective Repression

In "Taboo and the Ambivalence of Feelings," Freud discusses "taboo" as a prohibition that originates in the fear of demonic powers. In the course of time, taboo becomes detached from its origins, and remains as a source of power — "simply because it was such" — due to psychic persistence.[36] Freud attempts to get beneath animistic thinking in order to ground it in a projection resulting from a prior psychic conflict. On this basis, Freud interprets taboo as originating in the ambivalence of feelings.[37] In opposition to this, Horkheimer and Adorno trace the origin of animism to the fear of the unknown, which is objectified (as gods and demons) in the "cry of terror." Thus, they are able to trace the origin of taboo to the fear of what lies beyond the immanence of ordinary experience. In

34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. Freud, *Totem und Tabu*, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
37. *Ibid*, p. 78.

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animistic thought representing the unknown and unfamiliar as a prohibition, this taboo is then objectified in the form of gods and demons. This reinterpretation enables Horkheimer and Adorno to reconstruct Freud's reading of the internalization of taboo as a critical thesis concerning the positivist Enlightenment. For Freud, taboo originates in an externally-imposed "ancient prohibition."[38] In due course, the guarantee of the prohibition is displaced from an external source to an internal psychic mechanisms, which represses the desire for transgression. According to Freud: "As a result of the repression which has taken place, which is bound up with a forgetting — amnesia — the motivation of the prohibition which has become conscious remains unknown, and all attempts to replace it intellectually must fail, since these do not find the point at which they could get an effective purchase."[39] Horkheimer and Adorno take up this thesis of the sublimation of an external prohibition into internal mechanisms of repression, and apply it to the positivist Enlightenment. Positivist thinking thus appears as a rationalized form of the repression of the unknown and unfamiliar at the basis of the mythic belief system. In positivism, the original mythic fear of unknown powers is sublimated into a rationalized repression of the *transcendent in thinking*. The "pure immanence" that results from the positivist extirpation of animism is "nothing other than, so to speak, a universal taboo."[40] The "cry of terror" accompanying fear of the unknown thus persists as a coercive mechanism in the collective consciousness of modern positivism.

In order to depict the compulsive manner in which positivist thinking goes about eliminating animistic traces, the last remnants of mythic fear, Horkheimer and Adorno also apply the idea of the extension of the repressive mechanism to ever new objects.[41] Enlightenment discerns the remnants of mythic fear "not merely in unclarified concepts and words, as demonstrated by semantic language-criticism, but in any human assertion that has no place in the purposive context of self-preservation."[42] The elimination of "unclarified concepts and words," which the Vienna Circle had presented as a methodical approach to knowledge acquisition, is seen as a rationalized version of the taboo erected against the transgression of ordinary experience. Just as myth

38. *Ibid*, p. 42.
39. *Ibid*, pp. 37-8.
40. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
41. Freud, *Totem und Tabu*, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
42. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

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represents the eternal return of what has always already been, so positivist thinking outlaws any kind of experience that transcends the factual. This argument had been foreshadowed in Horkheimer's "The End of Reason": "Reason, in destroying conceptual fetishes, ultimately destroyed itself. . . . None of the categories of rationalism has survived. Modern science looks upon such of them as Mind, Will, Final Cause, Transcendental Creation, Innate Ideas, *res extensa* and *res cogitans* as spooks, despising them even more than Galileo did the cobwebs of scholasticism. Reason itself appears as a ghost that has emerged from linguistic usage. . . . The name of reason is held to be a meaningless symbol, an allegorical figure without a function, and all ideas that transcend the given reality are forced to share its disgrace."[43]

Therefore, positivist methodology is a repressive mechanism, whose function is to extinguish all possible constructions through which thinking could generate critical experience. In so doing, positivism extends the prohibition against the transgression of ordinary experience into the realm of thinking: "For positivism, which represents the court of judgement of enlightened reason, to digress into intelligible worlds is no longer merely prohibited, but counts rather as meaningless prattle. It does not need — fortunately for it — to be atheistic, because objectified thinking cannot even raise the problem. . . . In both the pregnancy of the mythical image and the clarity of the scientific formula, the eternity of the factual is confirmed and mere existence pure and simple expressed as the meaning which it blocks."[44]

In characterizing the positivist Enlightenment as a compulsion to eliminate the unknown from rational thinking, Horkheimer and Adorno follow Weber's description of scientific rationality in "Science as a Vocation." Scientific rationality could be understood in terms of "disenchantment," since its founding presupposition was a denial of animistic beliefs. The governing thesis of scientific rationality is that "there are in principle no *mysterious, incalculable powers at work*, but rather that one could in principle master everything through *calculation*."[45] On the basis

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43. Max Horkheimer, "The End of Reason," in *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, Vol. 19 (1941), p. 367.

44. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 27, 32 and 33. Adorno makes a similar point in his discussion of the law of contradiction. This law bans all content: "do not think in a dispersed manner, do not let yourself be diverted by unarticulated nature, but hold fast to the unity of what is meant as if it were a possession." See his *Zur Metakritik der Erkenntnistheorie* (Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 1970), pp. 86-7.

45. Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in Peter Lassman and Irving Velody, eds., *Max Weber's "Science as a Vocation,"* (London: Unwin, 1989), p. 13.

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of their genealogy critique, however, Horkheimer and Adorno subvert Weber's reading of this process as a movement from an "enchanted" to a "disenchanted," from a mythic to a genuinely "enlightened" standpoint. This critique is ironically stated in the claim that, for scientific rationality, "[t]here is to be no mystery, but also no wish for its revelation."[46] This "disenchantment" is not genuine, since the end result of the elimination of all traces of the unknown can only be an *enchantment* of the present: "To the scientific attitude, the separation of thought from the business of adjusting the factual, the departure from the enchanted circle of existence, is just as insane and self-destructive as, for the primitive magician, is the departure from the magic circle that he has prepared for the invocation, and in both cases the transgression of the taboo will result in the offender's ruin."[47]

In its attempt to repress all traces of the unknown in order to eliminate mythic fear, positivism ends up by rendering the existing as sacred and critical thought as profane: "[u]nder the title of brute facts, the social injustice from which these facts arise is as assuredly sacred as a realm to which access is eternally barred, as the medicine man was sacrosanct under the protection of his gods."[48] The extirpation of animistic traces, when it intensifies into a compulsion to eradicate the obscure from words and concepts, ends up eliminating all possible linguistic traces of critical experience. Positivist thinking replicates the pure immanence of myth — the eternal return of what is eternally the same — through its enchantment of the everyday. Hence "the subjection of all reality to logical formalism, is paid for by the obedient subjection of reason to what is directly given."[49] The anti-animistic strategy of the positivist Enlightenment does not result in a genuine escape from mythical enchantment. Positivism represents simply a rationalized intensification of the prohibition originating in fear of the unknown, which is objectified in mythical animism.

Horkheimer and Adorno deploy this genealogy critique in order to explain the emergence of both domination and reification. The division of labor is said to derive from the division in mythic religion between magical power and obedience, which gradually came to be ascribed exclusively to different social groups. The obedience of the subordinate groups was at this stage secured by the ability of the dominant to remove fear through their intercourse with the gods. In a developed social division of labor,

46. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

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however, the fear of nature which grounds mythic inequality is sublimated into social pressure. "The shudder that is objectified as a fixed image" in animism thereby "becomes the sign of the solidified domination of the privileged."[50] The fear of nature which had been the ground of mythic inequality is now sublimated into a "social coercion." This is expressed in universal concepts in the same way fear was expressed in mythic images. Here, Horkheimer and Adorno prefigure a theory of symbolic power, where the specific determinations attaching to conceptual forms are revealed as embodying the symbolic sublimation of relations of domination: "Even the deductive form of science reflects hierarchy and coercion. Just as the first categories represented the organized tribe and its power over the individual, so the whole logical order, dependency, connection, progression, and union of concepts is grounded in the corresponding relations of social reality, namely, the division of labor."[51]

The same argument underlies the critique of bourgeois justice. Horkheimer and Adorno read the principle of equivalence underlying bourgeois justice as a rationalized mythic principle of fate, which expresses the return to immanence. Just as mythic fate represents the reparation of a transgression in the natural order, so bourgeois justice represents "guilt and atonement, happiness and unhappiness" as the two sides of an equation.[52] As a rationalized form of the principle of fate, justice continues to be determined by fear of the unknown. Hence, natural conditions continue to exercise their power, no longer immediately, however, but "through the consciousness of human beings."[53] As a rationalized prohibition against the unknown, the positivist Enlightenment cannot actualize the true critical potential of justice. Justice "goes under in law."[54] As a rationalized intensification of mythic fear, positivist thinking removes all traces of a critical charge attached to the concept of justice, which would enable it to point beyond ordinary experience. Justice becomes a kind of verdict: "what would be different is made the same," which "critically

50. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 16. The influence of Nietzsche is apparent here. Nietzsche had traced the concepts of guilt and retribution to the contractual relation of creditor and debtor in *On The Genealogy of Morality*, tr. by C. Diethe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 43, 49.
53. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 16. The notion of *Untergang* is a Hegelian term for the dialectical transition, where the truth of a thing is revealed as its transition into an other.

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establishes the limits of possible experience."[55] Bourgeois justice, like mythic fate, is the guarantor of the order of pure immanence.

Here, Horkheimer and Adorno deploy their genealogy critique in order to theorize the reification identified by Lukács on a different basis. Reification derives from the compulsive elimination of animistic traces in the positivist *Enlightenment*. In the genealogical reading, the reifying abstraction of human qualities in the work process, the transformation of the worker into a "mechanical part," which Lukács had derived from the logic of the commodity form, is seen as part of the process whereby positivist thinking sets out to eliminate all non-mathematizable features of subjectivity. The "objectification of souls" in modern industry derives from the rationalized intensification of the taboo concerning the unknown.[56] Reification is thus traced to the rationalized repression that is a sublimation of mythic fear. The consequences of reification are interpreted in terms of an "impoverishment" of thought and sensuous experience: "The more complicated and precise the social, economic and scientific apparatus with whose service the production system has long harmonized the body, the more impoverished the experiences which it can offer. The elimination of qualities, their conversion into functions, is translated from science by means of the rationalized modes of labor to the experiential world of nations. . . . The regression of the masses today is their inability to hear the unheard-of with their own ears, to touch the unapprehended with their own hands — the new form of delusion which deposes every conquered mythic form."[57]

It should be clear by now why Habermas' charge that Horkheimer and Adorno "generalize" the theory of reification into a negativist philosophy of history is mistaken. Genealogy critique "unmasks" reification as the result of a rationally sublimated repression of critical experience. The purpose of this account is the very opposite of what Habermas ascribes to Horkheimer and Adorno. The genealogical account of the origins of reification is meant to demonstrate the contingent nature of the reified structures of the modern world. The history of the positivist Enlightenment is meant to develop a critical perspective on the experiential distortions that had come to be associated with modern capitalist societies.

The concept of "self-reflection" with which Horkheimer and Adorno emphasize the possibility of a conscious awareness of the historical pro-

55. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

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cess that has determined the positivist Enlightenment helps clarify the critique of the present.[58] The critical potential of self-reflection is organized according to the Freudian schema, in which it refers to the *rendering conscious* of the prohibition forgotten through its sublimation into *rationalized repression*. It is precisely this idea which is expressed in the well-known reference to the "mindfulness of nature in the subject."[59] The fulfilment of this mindfulness reveals the "unacknowledged truth of all culture." It should also be clear how *Dialectic of Enlightenment* deploys a genealogy critique to reinterpret the Freudian thesis concerning instinctual repression in the context of a critical social theory. *Selbstbesinnung* here takes the form of a critical reflection on the natural processes that have operated as unconscious determining forces in the course of enlightenment. As genealogy critique, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* attempts to lift the taboo on critical experience by bringing the origin of rationalized repression to collective consciousness. Horkheimer and Adorno trace the prohibition concerning critical experience to the fear accompanying the primitive encounter with the unknown. In its compulsive elimination of animistic traces, the positivist Enlightenment is driven by the unconscious workings of this original fear. Hence, "the subordination to nature consists in the domination of nature."[60] Genuine freedom from the blind determination of nature would only be achievable if thought could reflect on its own coercive mechanism, which is the mechanism of repression, as "nature that has forgotten itself."[61] In lifting the prohibition taken over from pre-history through self-reflection, enlightenment may become able to recover a critical experience of existing social forms.

Genealogy Critique and Social Theory

The downside to Horkheimer and Adorno's reliance on a genealogy critique, of course, is that it renders problematic the possibility of a critical focus on *specific* historical and cultural contexts. As Herbert Schnädelbach has indicated,[62] by tracing cultural reification to an *ur*-repression, Horkeimer and Adorno seem to render the analysis of social processes irrelevant to both reification and emancipation. Schnädelbach,

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58. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
62. In "Die Aktualität der *Dialektik der Aufklärung*," in his *Zur Rehabilitierung des animal rationale* (Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 1992).

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however, wrongly characterizes *Dialectic of Enlightenment* as a form of totalizing social myth, which presents the truth of history in mythic form, as a "narrative explication of the historical world."[63] Instead, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is best understood as genealogy critique, which deploys history in order to generate a distanciating perspective on the present. Its purpose is not and cannot be to present the "rationalizing standardization of each and all" as an "unavoidable cultural fate."[64] Nonetheless, genealogy critique shares some of the shortcomings of social myth, in that it cannot relate the critical history, characterized in terms of repression, to social-cultural processes and institutions which are both the bearers of reification and, potentially, constitute the conditions in which self-reflection could emerge. In order to lay the basis of a critical social theory, the genealogy of the suppression of critical experience would have to be translated into a theory capable of tracing the connection between experiential distortions and social processes. This is not to say that the genealogy critique of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* has "failed." Horkheimer and Adorno were acutely aware that Critical Theory must adjust itself to the particular needs of the time and place in which critical activity occurs. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* was a strategic intervention at a time in which, with the background of the fascist threat, and the authors' pessimistic assessment of mass culture, the prospect of any kind of constructive critical praxis seemed particularly bleak. In this context, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* seeks to serve as a "placeholder" for critical thought, by uncovering the false claims to necessity and totality of the dominant, ideologically-constricted thinking. For this reason, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is an exemplary illustration of how Critical Theory ought to concern itself with making possible a critical reflection on the most significant conflicts of the social order in which it takes place.

63. *Ibid*, p. 240.
64. *Ibid*, p. 245.

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Between Reification and Mystification: Rethinking the Economy of Principles

Christopher P. Long and Richard A. Lee, Jr.

Contemporary philosophy raises the concern, under the banner of the "end of metaphysics," that the deployment of principles results in theoretical domination that also has serious practical implications. This concern recognizes that theory and practice are always interrelated and that the deployment of principles always involves a dimension of domination. Neither claim should be denied in attempts to think outside the closure of metaphysics. Under the pretext of "discovery," the metaphysical project posits the priority of permanent universal principles meant to account for concrete individuals.[1] In its ancient manifestation, this positing of universals over individuals found its highest expression in the authority of substantial forms; in its modern manifestation, in the hegemony of the subject. In both cases, the principle functions hegemonically within the economy of being it sets in order. Such principles are totalizing insofar as nothing escapes the purview of their influence, and they leave no space from which to be critiqued.

The critique of principles can be traced back at least to Heidegger, if not to Nietzsche. Heidegger often dubs Aristotle the initiator of metaphysics,[2]

1. "Individual" here refers only to concrete beings that are not automatically an instantiation of a universal. The term "particular" refers to instantiations of universals, and "singular" to the irreducibly unique.

2. In the *Physics*, which Heidegger regards as the hidden source of Western metaphysics, he also sees Aristotle retaining something of the pre-socratic, non-metaphysical approach to being. See Martin Heidegger, "Vom Wesen und Begriff der physis Aristoteles, Physik B, 1," in *Gesamtausgabe: Wegmarken,* ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976), Vol. 9, p. 242.

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since Aristotle understood being in terms of forms, i.e., *to on* is thought of as *ousia*, which is presumed to be *eidos*. While Aristotle often tends to emphasize the absolute priority of substantial form over concrete individuals, he also frequently tries to do justice to the individual's irreducibility.[3] While the first tendency has been criticized as being merely dominational, and therefore even dangerous, the importance of the second has rarely been appreciated.

In what follows, this second tendency within the history of metaphysics will be traced to undermine two tacit assumptions underlying the rhetoric of the "end of metaphysics": First, that the hegemonic function of principles necessitates their outright rejection; and second, that the "end of metaphysics" implies the end of the philosophy of principles. To undermine the identification of principles with domination, it is necessary to emphasize a para-metaphysics running alongside the history of metaphysics, by pointing to Aristotle's ambiguous legacy concerning principles and the way William of Ockham, recalling this tendency in Aristotle, deployed principles *vis-à-vis* individuals.[4] While the positing of metaphysical principles operates under the shroud of pure objectivity, para-metaphysical principles never loose sight of their dominational nature.

The question of the alleged end of metaphysics can be more easily dealt with by uncovering the para-metaphysical tradition and approaching the problem of the hegemonic functioning of principles in a way different from Heidegger's. In confronting the history of metaphysics, Heidegger seeks to reveal the inherent groundlessness of all principles. As in the case of the "discovering" of the metaphysical project, however, this "revelation" is a mystified variation of the same approach deployed by the tradition of metaphysics, with the added disadvantage that the principle of

3. Werner Marx suggests that the beginning of "metaphysics" can be traced to book Z.1 of *Metaphysics*, where Aristotle claims that the question *ti to on*, "what is being," is equivalent to the question *tis he ousia*, which Marx translates as "what is the essence of a particular being." See *Heidegger and the Tradition*, tr. by Theodore Kisiel and Murray Greene (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), pp. 3ff. This translation, however, may not capture the true nature of metaphysics, for it suggests a respect for individuality not typical of the metaphysical tradition.

4. Steven Daniel argues that there is a "paramodern" tradition that is often eclipsed by postmodern critiques of modernity. See his "Paramodern Strategies of Philosophical Historiography," in *Epoché*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1993), pp. 41-63. For Daniel, paramodernism is "a postmodernism within modernism" (59). This "paramodern" tradition, found even in quintessentially modern thinkers such as Descartes, Spinoza, Berkeley, and Kant anticipates some of the concerns of "postmodernity." The term "para-metaphysical" is used here to identify the thinking of principles within the history of Western philosophy that is not captured by the metaphysical over-determination of the *hegemonic function* of principles.

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domination becomes shrouded in a mysterious aura. Unlike Heidegger's dangerous response to the end of metaphysics, Adorno has sought to safegard critique in the face of the closure of metaphysics.

An Ambiguous Legacy: Universal and Individual in Aristotle

The problem of ontological grounds arises originally in the first book of Aristotle's *Physics*. In the *Categories* Aristotle had circumvented this problem by simply positing the ontological priority of the individual over the universal, thus obfuscating the problem of substantial generation.[5] Change is merely accidental, never substantial. It is of the sort that occurs when an already existing individual takes on some accidental property, e.g., when Socrates goes from being pale to being tan.[6] Here the individual's ontological ground is never considered — the question concerning how Socrates actually came into being is evaded.[7] In the *Physics*, where Aristotle confronts the question of substantial generation, the problem of ontological grounds cannot be avoided.[8]

The first book of the *Physics* can be seen as an initial attempt to provide an ontological account of the ground of individual beings (*ta physika*).[9] However, in order to deal with the problem of substantial generation, Aristotle had to develop a more robust metaphysical apparatus than the one in the *Categories*. He accomplishes this in *Physics* I.7 by thinking individuality itself as a composite (*suntheton*) of form and matter.[10] This shift allows Aristotle to develop a single economy of principles able to account for both accidental and substantial change:[11] What guarantees continuity

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5. Aristotle, *Aristotelis Categoriae*, ed. by L. Minio-Paluello (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949), 2a13-20.

6. *Ibid.*, 4a14-22.

7. Montgomery Furth emphasizes the care Aristotle takes in the *Categories* to avoid thematizing the species or *eidos* as ontologically constitutive of the individual. See Montgomery Furth, *Substance, Form and Psyche: an Aristotelian Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 33-40.

8. According to Furth: "The relationship . . . is this: *they are the same world*; however, the *Categories* sees this world in much less depth and detail than do the later works" (*Ibid.*, p. 12).

9. Ute Guzzoni sees *Physics* A as the place where Aristotle considers individual beings as ontologically grounded. This text is important, because it consists of: "Aristotle's teaching concerning the principles of becoming as such in its very process of becoming." See *Grund und Allgemeinheit: Untersuchung zum Aristotelischen Verständnis der ontologischen Gründe* (Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1975), pp. 30-32.

10. *Ibid.*, 190b6ff.

11. Johannes Fritsche, *Methode und Beweisziel im Ersten Buch der "Physikvorlesung" des Aristoteles* (Frankfurt/M: Verlag Anton Hain Meisenheim GmbH, 1986), p. 137.

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through change is no longer the persistence of the individual receiving contrary properties, but the permanence of the form that, as Aristotle puts it at the end of A.7, "is sufficient to produce the change by means of its absence and presence."[12] By ascribing a powerful ontological role to substantial form (*eidos*), Aristotle goes beyond positing the concrete individual as ontologically primary and raises the question concerning the ontological ground of individual beings — a question with which he deals in depth in the middle books of the *Metaphysics*.

The question as to whether the primary principle of being is universal or individual haunts the discussion of *ousia* in the middle books of the *Metaphysics*. On the one hand, this discussion inherits from the *Categories* a tendency to give ontological preeminence to individuals; on the other, the introduction in the *Physics* of a new understanding of *eidos* suggests that the universal species is better suited to account for the being of the individual. Because of these two competing accounts, for centuries commentators have derived coherent and textually valid solutions from both sides of the universal/individual debate.[13] This problem of interpretation is itself instructive, because it emerges out of Aristotle's attempts to think the ground of being, and opens up the possibility of para-metaphysics.

The case for the universal is based on Aristotle's discussion of the *ti en einai* or "essence" in *Metaphysics* Z.4-6, where he suggests that essence is the species (*eidos*) of a genus, and therefore something to some extent universal.[14] He goes on to argue that, if it is to be knowable, an *ousia* must be identical with its essence — and it is assumed that if anything is knowable, *ousia* is.[15] This justifies ascribing universality to the primary principle of being: all knowledge is universal, and if *ousia* is a mere individual, then it cannot be knowable.[16] Obviously, if *ousia* turns out to be individual, the

12. Aristotle, *Physics*, *op. cit.*, 191a6-7.

13. The debate goes on. For a defense of the position that primary *ousia* is a universal, see Michael J. Loux, *Primary Ousia: An Essay on Aristotle's* Metaphysics *Z and H* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991). Micheal Frede and Günther Patzig, on the other hand, argue that there is room for individual forms in Aristotle. See *Aristotles "Metaphysik Z" Kommentar* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1988), Vol. II. Mary Louise Gill argues that the primary *ousia* of the *Metaphysics* turns out to be individual composites. See *Aristotle on Substance: The Paradox of Unity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989). See also Edward Halper, *One and Many in Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1989), pp. 227-255.

14. Aristotle, *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, ed. by Werner Wilhelm Jaeger (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1992), 1030a11-13.

15. *Ibid.*, 1031a12-b22.

16. This is clearly stated in *Metaphysics* B, where Aristotle explicitly formulates the universal/individual *aporia*. See 1003a7-17.

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possibility of a science (*episteme*) of being *qua* being is threatened.

The argument for universals does not depend exclusively on these epistemological concerns, and the universality of essence/form and of *ousia* is discussed in Z.7-9, where Aristotle is concerned, not with knowledge, but with the generation of composites. This corresponds to the schema outlined in the *Physics*, where the generation of a composite is understood in terms of the form's embodiment in matter. Here, it is claimed that the form must not be understood to be generated during this process, for otherwise it could not be a ground — another, ontologically more original form would be required. Thus, Aristotle calls the form a "such," not a "this," and argues that what is generated is a "such this" (*tode toionde*).[17] In this manner, he can account for the intergenerational continuity of the form, for the form of the parent is the same as that of the child: "a human being generates a human being."[18] The form can order individually existing beings, because it is both eternal (or at least ungenerated) and universal.[19] This is one strategy deployed to address the problem of grounds.

It is not, however, Aristotle's only strategy. At the beginning of the *Metaphysics*' investigation into *ousia*, when he claims that an *ousia* is a "this something" (*tode ti*) and "separable" (*to choriston*), Aristotle posits the ontological priority of the individual.[20] These criteria grow out of his intuition in the *Categories* that concrete individuals are ontologically primary. Yet, with the introduction in the *Physics* of the notion of *eidos*, along with the recognition that the individuals of the *Categories* are composites of *eidos* and matter, the question arises as to whether the form or the composite satisfy these conditions best.[21]

One of the arguments in *Metaphysics* Z.13 against those who want see *ousia* as universal illustrates why Aristotle seeks to posit the ontological priority of the individual. There, he claims that the *ousia* of something must be peculiar to that being; it cannot belong to another being, for if it did, then two different beings would actually be one and the same.[22]

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17. *Ibid.*, 1033b23-26.
18. *Ibid.*, 1033b23-26.
19. Frede and Patzig point out that the form may appear and disappear without being generated or destroyed. See Frede and Patzig, *op. cit.*, p. 136. Aristotle also suggests this possibility in, e.g., Z.15 1039b23-26, H.3 1043b14-16, H.5 1044b21-22, Λ.3 and 1070a15-17.
20. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, *op. cit.*, 1029a26-7.
21. Aristotle leaves the question open in 1029a29-30, stating that both the *eidos* and the thing from both *eidos* and matter "seem to be *ousia* more than matter."
22. *Ibid.*, 1038b9-15.

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Thus, because it is common to many beings, something universal cannot ground separate individuals without reducing them to the same. This simply reiterates the requirement outlined in Z.6 that the essence of a being must be identical with the being;[23] if the essence were universal, then it could not account for individuality. Thus, in the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle insists that *ousia* must be a *tode ti*, which in its most strict sense denotes a concrete individual.[24]

Of these two alternatives, the universalizing strategy can account for continuity through intergenerational change and the possibility of knowledge as traditionally conceived. But it cannot ground the individual's individuality, since it turns the individual into a particular — a mere instantiation of the universal. On the other hand, the individualizing strategy posits the individual's uniqueness — its singularity — but cannot account for continuity and knowledge. In short, the first strategy seems totalizing; the second, anarchic. There is, however, an undeveloped suggestion that the individualizing strategy may not relinquish its ability to account for knowledge. In *Metaphysics* M.10, Aristotle questions the traditional assumption that "all knowledge is universal: ". . . 'knowledge,' (*episteme*) just as 'to know,' (*epistesthai*) is twofold, being on the one hand in potentiality, but on the other, in actuality. Potential [knowledge], like matter, being universal and indeterminate, is of the universal and indeterminate; but actual [knowledge], being determinate and of that which is determinate, is 'this' and is of a 'this'."[25]

Here, Aristotle seems to revise his concept of knowledge by suggesting that knowledge arising directly out of the actual encounter with determinate individuals may also be considered genuine. This is significant not only for his individualizing strategy, but also for any critique of "metaphysics" as a history guided by a fetish for hegemonic principles seeking to subsume individuals to universals. Here, as elsewhere,[26] Aristotle

23. *Ibid.*, 1031b19-22. For a detailed discussion of Z.13, see Loux, *op. cit.*, pp. 197-235, who argues that Aristotle only rejects the notion that *ousia* is a universal *qua* genus, but not in other senses. For an argument that Z.13 makes the stronger claim, i.e., that *ousia* cannot be universal in any sense, see Frede and Patzig, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-263.

24. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, *op. cit.*, 1042a29-31.

25. *Ibid.*, 1087a14-18.

26. At issue here is Aristotle's "empiricism." At the end of *Posterior Analytics*, he argues that even scientific knowledge (*episteme*) derives its universals from experience with individuals by induction (*epagoge*) (100b3-5). In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, he insists that, although operating with universals, practical wisdom (*phronesis*) must also know individuals (1141b14-16). In both cases, direct experience with individuals is decisive. This strategy also guides Aristotle's biological work.

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focuses on determinate individuals and grounds his concept of knowledge in the direct encounter with them. This reorientation of knowledge away from universals and toward individuals is eclipsed when the "history of metaphysics" is couched in terms of the hegemonic operation of universal principles and their concomitant annihilation of the other. In Aristotle, there is already a tendency to do justice to actually existing individuals that persists throughout the so-called "history of metaphysics."

Taking Sides: Ockham's Principled Nominalism

The debate between realism and nominalism in later medieval philosophy mirrors these two strategies already present in Aristotle. While the universalizing, i.e., realist strategy remained viable, because of its ability to account for both intergenerational continuity and knowledge, the individualizing, i.e., nominalist strategy also became popular with thinkers wanting to maintain that God's creative power is absolute and absolutely free. Realism threatens the free creative power of God for the very reasons it is successful: the continuity of being and knowing must ultimately be traced back to the divine mind. If universal principles are grounds of beings, then they must also be the grounds of God's creation. Universal principles must be ultimately resolved into divine ideas in God's mind.[27] On the other hand, the nominalist strategy must confront the question concerning the possibility of knowledge if it wants to avoid a skeptical (anarchic) stance toward the world. Thus, for medieval nominalism, the task is to regard the individual as ontologically basic, while at the same time recognizing the universality of knowledge.

In this context, William of Ockham reclaims the reading of Aristotle that gives priority to the individual. For him, all beings that exist outside the soul are singular, and cannot be thought to be constituted by or composed of a universal principle. Otherwise, either such a universal principle would have no relation to individuals, or it will ultimately be resolved into singular things.[28] More importantly, he questions the grounding function of universality in its relation to an individual. How could an individual be constituted by a universal principle and still be an individual? As the essence of the individual, such a universal would make the individual both

27. See, e.g., Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* Pars Prima, Quaestio 15.

28. Ockham's notion of the soul is similar to Aristotle's. Yet, for Ockham, what is most important is that knowledge is its *antekeimenon*, i.e., a proper object that the soul, by its very nature, grasps. Thus, for Ockham and all medieval Aristoteleans, knowledge is analyzed in conjunction with sensation.

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singular and universal.[29] But Ockham's most serious argument against universals playing an ontological role comes from the notion of God's power. If there is a universal substance outside the soul constituting an individual ontologically, then God could not create any individual; some universal pre-existed it. And even then, God could not annihilate any individual without also annihilating other individuals. Such limitations contradict God's omnipotence. If universal principles ground beings, they also must ground and determine God's creation of those beings.

Since Ockham denies that universal principles ontologically constitute individuals, singularity must belong immediately to an individual. In this sense, Ockham's reclamation of Aristotle attempts to think individuals as standing outside the purview of universal, ontological principles. Yet, from the viewpoint of concepts and knowledge, universal principles do have a sphere of operation. For Ockham, universals are "intentions of the soul," which do "not differ from the act of understanding itself."[30] Universals are only mental terms that function in the sphere of knowledge, but not in the sphere of being. For Ockham, all concepts are accidents of the soul — "passions of the soul," through which the soul understands.[31] These concepts arise when the intellect apprehends a singular thing. They must arise from the apprehension of singulars, because that is all there is outside the soul. This apprehension gives rise to a cognition of this singular thing, which can stand for this singular thing when the soul forms propositions about it.

In addition to concepts that arise from and are therefore immediately related to singulars, universals can also arise from the soul's contact with singulars. Ockham gives the example of the concept "human." This concept signifies Socrates and Plato, but not one more than the other. All concepts function as signs: a singular concept signifies one individual, a universal concept signifies more than one individual. The concept is not a constitutive principle of the things it signifies. Rather, because it is a sign, it presupposes the givenness of things outside the soul that cause it. Since universals are reduced to their significative function, they are prevented from performing an ontological function.

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29. William of Ockham, *Summa Logicae*, ed. by Philotheus Boehner, *et al.*, *Guillemi de Ockham Opera Philosophica et Theologica*, OP I (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1974), p. 51. Aristotle develops similar arguments in *Metaphysics* B.6 1003a10-12 when formulating the universal/particular *aporia*.

30. *Ibid.*, 53.

31. William of Ockham, *Expositio in Librum Praedicamentorum Aristotelis*, ed. by Gedeon Gál, *Guillelmi de Ockham Opera Philosophica et Theologica*, OP II (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1978), p. 351.

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The universal is therefore analyzed along linguistic, rather than ontological lines. Just as a window display in a shop signifies that those items are for sale, so also the concept "human" signifies this and that human, etc. In this way, while the universal is a principle of knowing things, it is not a principle of the being of the thing known through it. In addition, this universal knowledge always presupposes knowledge of the singular, because knowledge is caused by things that are always singular. Thus, Ockham reinterprets Aristotle's statement that "The intellect understands universals, the senses, however, only know singulars," to distinguish the intellect (i.e., *nous*) from the senses:[32] knowledge can be of both the singular and the universal, while sensation can be only of the singular.[33] He modifies the traditional understanding of Aristotle's *nous* into a foundational knowledge with the singular as its proper object. The truth of a proposition that contains a universal sign such as "Socrates is human" is determined not because there is some principle of Socrates's being that is humanity, but because "human" will signify a number of individual things, one of which is Socrates. This means that universals are ontologically posterior to existing individuals. As signs, they have a proper function in science (*episteme*) and in other spheres of human activity. However, since they are signs, they cannot be posited in advance of things. For Ockham, universal principles begin with the sheer givenness of the singular. As posterior to singulars, universals function as principles of knowledge that need to be constantly held in check by singulars.

If Ockham removes principles from the economy of being, he also reorients knowing so that it can deal with the givenness of singularity. Taking its cue from Aristotle's universalizing strategy, realism reserved "knowledge" for universal principles. Ockham's nominalism develops an account of intuitive knowledge that begins with a response to the individual.[34] This kind of knowledge is the basis of all knowledge, including science (*episteme*). Furthermore, all knowledge deserves that name only to the extent that it can be reduced to this basic kind of knowledge. Intuitive knowledge establishes not only the thing's existence and non-existence,

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32. Aristotle, *Aristotelis De Anima*, ed. by W. D. Ross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), (417b22-23).)

33. William of Ockham, *Scriptum in Librum Primum Sententiarum Ordinatio*, ed. by Gedeon Gál, O.F.M. and Stephen Brown, O.F.M., *Guillelmi de Ockham Opera Philosophica et Theologica*, OT I (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1967), p. 64.

34. *Ibid.*, 31: "Intuitive knowledge of a thing is such knowledge by virtue of which it can be known whether the thing is or is not, such that if the thing is,the intellect immediately judges it to be and evidently knows that it is."

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but also the context in which the thing is encountered.[35] This act of knowing remains tied to the context that caused it. Even when it is universal, its semiotic function always responds to the concrete individual(s) that the concept signifies and which caused it.[36]

On the eve of the turn from substantial form to subjectivity, Ockham developed a principled nominalism. Since the soul is not separated from the world, its concept can be traced back to the world in which it finds itself. Caused by the individual, the universal concept signifies the individual and allows the formulation of true statements about it. Yet, because it is a concept, it cannot be the individual's ontological principle, which is left untouched by universals. The deployment of principles always respects individuals, because it depends on them.

The Problem with Principles: Heidegger

Aristotle's individualizing strategy and Ockham's nominalism exemplify the para-metaphysical approach to principles at the heart of the so-called "history of metaphysics." They illustrate that both domination and its critique belong to the deployment of principles. Heidegger's "end of metaphysics" eclipses the para-metaphysical account of principles by understanding them one-dimensionally in terms of domination.

Throughout his long career, Heidegger was always concerned with the relation of being (*Sein*) to rational ground, i.e., the essence of principle.[37] Early on, he realized that the principle of ground, articulated in Leibniz' principle of sufficient reason, is groundless.[38] In short, beings do not have a ground. For Heidegger, metaphysics has posited the ground of beings in the form of reason. When the principle of ground is questioned, its way of coming to presence – abyss – is revealed.[39] For Heidegger, this abyss is an

35. *Ibid.*: ". . . intuitive knowledge is such that when some things are known of which one inheres in the other, is locally distant from the other, or . . . is related to the other, it is immediately known by virtue of such simple knowledge whether the thing inheres or does not inhere, whether it is distant or close, and so on concerning other contingent truths."

36. See Richard Lee, *Science, the Singular, and the Question of Theology* (New York: Palgrave-St. Martin's, in press).

37. Here *Sein* is not translated as "Being" (with a capital "B") in order to challenge its ontological difference. To avoid ambiguity, the German word will appear in brackets.

38. Martin Heidegger, "Vom Wesen des Grundes," in *Gesamtausgabe: Wegmarken, op. cit.*; "Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz," in *Gesamtausgabe, op. cit.*, Vol. 26. See also Hans Ruin, "Leibniz and Heidegger on Sufficient Reason," in *Studia Leibnitiana*, No. 30 (1998), pp. 49-67.

39. Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe: Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis), op. cit.*, Vol. 65, p. 379. "Abyss" for Heidegger simply names the staying away of ground. "Coming to presence" for Heidegger must also be understood, at the same time, as a withdrawing.

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expression of truth as event. In the 1930s, he saw the truth of beings in terms of their coming-to-presence and withdrawal, i.e., as the abyss. As a result, he brought to language the withdrawal of principles in their very coming-to-presence: "Being 'is' the abyss."[40]

The mystification implicit in Heidegger's early thought (including his use of religious and quasi-religious terminology) becomes explicit with his notion of the abyss — an empty concept — as the essence of ground.[41] For Heidegger, ground functions dominationally in giving to things an account (*ratio*) that forces them to answer to the demands of reason. If in the 1930s Heidegger wants to think the truth of being as the event (*Ereignis*) of appropriation, then ground or rather grounding will also have to be thought of as appropriation. In other words, ground determines how truth happens, as the truth of being.[42] Ground, i.e., what makes a principle what it is, is to be thought of not as the ultimate foundation of beings, and therefore of truth, but as paving the way for the event of truth. If being (*Seyn*) is thought of as event, then truth will be the clearing of the self-concealing of this occurrence. As this clearing, truth is the "ground as the abyss": the ground wherein eventuation occurs.[43]

Although Heidegger wants to trace ground back to its own lack of ground, he pays too high a price. Especially for the Heidegger of the 1930s, ground arises from need.[44] Yet, this need is not human, but inheres in being (*Seyn*). Thus, the need for ground is traced back to being (*Seyn*) — being as arrival (*Austrag*) and event (*Ereignis*), and therefore as abyss. The danger here is that this appeal to the abyss can function as a groundless ground for any possible economy of principles. Abyss merely names the ways in which being (*Seyn*) occurs, but remains impotent in analyzing the economies in which it has already come to presence. By attempting to think the abyss as the originary coming to presence and withdrawal of being (*Sein*), which is inherently ahistorical and blind to socio-historical contexts, Heidegger leaves no room in which to engage critically the

40. Heidegger, "Besinnung," in *Gesamtausgabe*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 66, p. 77; and his *Principle of Reason*, tr. by Reginald Lilly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), p. 51.

41. Heidegger explicitly appeals to the notion of emptiness in his analysis of the abyss in the *Beiträge*, *op. cit.*, pp. 380f.

42. Heidegger, "Die Geschichte Des Seyns," *Gesamtausgabe*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 69, p. 95 (emphasis in the original): "History is the grounding of the truth of *Seyn*, indeed in such a way, that this grounding as such an eventuation is in the event of appropriation as arrival."

43. Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe: Beiträge Zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 65, p. 346.

44. Heidegger, "Besinnung," *op. cit.*, Vol. 66, p. 46.: "Seyn is the de-ciding for itself as the abyss and thus the ungroundable need of the necessity of all grounding."

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ways in which principles are always already expressions of and determined by the socio-historical contexts in which they come about.[45] To insist that no account of the abyss is possible is to relinquish the possibility of holding the abyss accountable — and this disengagement becomes particularly troubling when the revealing/concealing of being comes about in a politically dangerous fashion. If one sees this positing of the abyss as the end of metaphysics (recognizing that metaphysics is inherently hegemonic), then all talk of such an end annihilates the possibility of critique.

Critique and/of Principles: Adorno on Heidegger's Ground

These dangers were recognized by Adorno.[46] Although Adorno shares Heidegger's concern for the problem of grounding principles, he recognizes that the question of ground, which arises out of the attempt to think beings, has to do with the very relation of thinking to beings. He insists that philosophy must recognize (in the form of dialectics) that "the objects are not completely absorbed in their concept, that these come into contradiction with the received norm of adequatio."[47] He wants to expose the non-identity that is occluded in the process of thinking with identity. For Adorno, all thinking is identifying. As such, it is "the rigorous awareness of the non-identical" that drives identitarian thinking to recognize "its unavoidable insufficiency, its guilt concerning that which it thinks."[48]

Thus, where Heidegger seeks to evade the guilt endemic to thinking by relegating it to the merely "ontological," Adorno recognizes both the inadequacy and the inescapability of conceptual thinking. He explicitly rejects the ontological difference — "No being (*Sein*), without being (*Seiende*)"[49] — and in so doing, he rejects the step back behind the occurrance of being (*Sein*) as an attempt to push philosophical thinking beyond the conceptual, i.e., beyond itself. To put Adorno's position in Heideggerian terms, the

45. This ahistorical thinking of principles is in direct opposition to the historical thinking Heidegger pursues in the 1930's. For Heidegger, history is the history of being, and, as such, stands behind, beneath, or outside of the socio-political, or even ordinary events that are normally seen as constituting history.

46. See, e.g., the section on "Ontological Need" in Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, tr. by E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1994). See too, Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, tr. by Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Evanston: Northwester University Press, 1973). Adorno also criticizes Heidegger's notion of historicity in "Die Idee der Naturgeschichte," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), Vol. 1.

47. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

48. *Ibid.*

49. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

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abyss is in fact the truth of being (*Sein/Seyn*), but only because every economy of principles is unable to capture completely the objects of its concern. Adorno's "rigorous awareness" of this remainder — of the irreducible non-identity of being and thought — makes possible the critique of any particular economy of principles. In this way, he provides a perspective from which not only to flesh out the critique of Heidegger's abyss-mal attempt to step back behind the economies of principles to their primordial mode of coming-to-presence and withdrawing (the abyss), but also to deal with the crisis of the end of metaphysics in a way that retains the capacity for critique.

Heidegger's appeal to the abyss has a counterproductive effect. Instead of resulting in the recognition of the inability of thinking to capture exhaustively the being of beings (*Das Sein der Seienden*), it forces thinking into a realm for which it is completely ill equiped. In so doing, Heidegger enjoins thinking to jettison the concepts with which it operates, forcing it instead to follow the sense [*Sinn*] of the primordial abyss. The consequence of such an injunction is the mystification of what remains outside conceptual thinking. Heidegger's response to this mystification is to recast thinking in the form of *Besinnung*.[50] Unable to deploy concepts, thinking naturally mystifies what remains beyond its grasp and infuses it with the aura of the original.[51] According to Adorno, Heidegger's attempt "to come to terms with the inaccessibility of the empirical" loses its way when what does not fit within the determinations of thinking cannot be made transparent, but remains in its pure "thereness," is changed into a universal concept and stamped with ontological worth.[52]

Paradoxically, this sort of mystification turns into reification: "In reaction to the loss [*Verlust*] of the aura, Heidegger rearranges its function, turning the fact that things point beyond themselves into a substrate and in this way making that fact itself like a thing."[53] To this mystified reification, Adorno opposes dialectical critique, which "respects the concept of the first being (*Seins*) itself. Heidegger repeats the Hegelian legerdemain. Only Hegel does this openly, while Heidegger, not wanting to be an idealist, turbidly shrouds the ontologization of the ontical. The driving force behind

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50. See Heidegger, "Besinnung," *op. cit.*, Vol. 66, pp. 47-49.

51. On the concept of "aura," see Walter Benjamin, "The Artwork in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Reflections*, ed. by Peter Demetz (New York: Schocken Books, 1978).

52. Adorno, "Die Idee der Naturgeschichte," *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, 351.

53. Adorno, *Negative Dialectic*, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

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dressing up the deficiency of a concept as its surplus is in each case the old Platonic error that whatever is nonsensible is the higher."[54]

The hypostatization of what is beyond the conceptual always amounts to a renunciation of critique. It mystifies what remains after thinking encounters concrete beings by infusing it with unassailable authority. For Adorno, the deficiency of the concept is indeed its surplus, not as something higher, better, more originary, but rather as the point of departure of critique. Thus, by setting dialectical critique against Heidegger's "mindfulness" of the abyss, Adorno recognizes that Heidegger's originary ontological thinking annihilates the possibility of any critique of principles. It does this by leaving the individual behind in thought's pursuit of the abyss.

In order to retain the possibility of critique, two aspects of principles must be recognized: principles are always determined by the socio-historical context in which they are deployed, and the deployment of principles is by nature coercive. While Heidegger seeks to eschew the guilt endemic to the coercion of thinking by appealing to the ahistorical, pre-conceptual originality of the abyss, Adorno, ackowledging that guilt is interwined with thinking, responds to the coercion of identitarian thinking by pointing to its socio-historical contingency and pursuing the need for self-reflective critique.[55] Thinking must recognize its guilt and be capable of responding to the individual in the concrete context in which it is encountered.

Principles function coercively both as origins of and within whatever economy they establish. Since, however, they can never completely capture what they are meant to determine, there is always space from which they can be challenged, questioned, and revised. The remainder that is not captured by principles is what makes critical thinking possible. The wish to step back behind the deployment of principles and escape historical contingency has haunted philosophy since Parmenides. Rather than submitting to philosophy's futile attempts to achieve absolute freedom, Adorno recognizes that "all philosophy, even that with the intention towards freedom, carries unfreedom with itself. . . . Philosophy has coercion in itself, but this coercion alone protects philosophy from regressing into the arbitrary. Thinking is able to critically recognize its immanent

54. Adorno, *Negative Dialectic*, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

55. Adorno, *Negative Dialectic*, *op. cit.*, p. 232: "Without a coercive moment (*Zwangsmoment*) thinking in general could not be. The opposition between freedom and thinking can no more be disposed of by thinking than it can for thinking, rather, it demands self-reflective thinking (*Selbstbesinnung*)."

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coercive character; its own coercion is the medium of its emancipation."[56]

The point Adorno establishes by emphasizing freedom and emancipation can be more effectively recast in terms of justice, understood as the ability to respond to the individual in the context in which it is encountered. Adorno already anticipates this shift from freedom to justice.[57] This reorientation of thinking away from the possibilities of being toward the actual encounter with concrete, historical beings turns thinking toward justice. Thinking is no longer the pure positing of the subject, nor is it a mystified attempt to think beyond the conceptual. Rather, it is the dynamic response to direct concrete encounters between beings. To be sure, the individual never finds its complete determination in the conceptual, but cannot encounter it without it. To a certain extent, such thinking has already been anticipated by the para-metaphysical elements in Aristotle and Ockham.

Principles and Endgames: Towards Critically Transformative Action

Wrapped in the rhetoric of the "end of metaphysics" is the assumption that the history of Western philosophy can be seen for what it was, precisely because contemporary philosophy, standing at the alleged closure of metaphysics, escapes its determination.[58] Yet, no mere positing of an end, not even an infinite proliferation of "posts-," can separate the present from the history which determined it. This is why the problem of grounding principles had to be rethought through an historical analysis of the ways in which economies of principles have been established.

This analysis was designed to emphasize another side of the history of Western philosophy that is not cleanly captured under "metaphysics." The polemic attack on metaphysics sees Aristotle as prefiguring the hegemonic way the universalizing strategy of principles functions. This understanding of the role of principles gained influence under medieval realist interpretations such as that of Aquinas and was legitimated in Hegel's account of the history of philosophy as the unfolding of the concept. Aristotle, however,

56. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

57. Adorno, "Die Idee der Naturgeschichte," *op. cit.*, p. 355: "the concrete unity [of nature and history] is one that is not oriented by the opposition between possible being [*das Sein*] and actual being [*das Sein*], but one that is created out of the determination of the actual being [*das Sein*] itself. The scheme of history in the new ontology [i.e., in Heidegger] has the chance only to earn ontological worth and the prospect to come to an actual interpretation of being, if it radically directs itself not towards the possibilities of being, but towards being [*das Seiende*] as such in its concrete, inner-historical determinateness.

58. Cf. Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger, On Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, tr. by Christine-Marie Gros and Reiner Schürmann (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 17ff.

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deploys another strategy that seeks to do justice to the individual in the context in which it obtains. This strategy, resulting from Aristotle's interest in saving the phenomena, suggests a para-metaphysical approach toward the deployment of principles. Ockham's philosophy manifests this approach when it argues that principles arise out of encounters with individuals, and operate within these contexts. Perhaps more than any other thinker, however, he was aware of the danger of positing these principles as ontologically responsible for individual beings. If this para-metaphysical approach is already operative in Aristotle and Ockham, it may also obtain in other thinkers. Para-metaphysics runs alongside and within the history of metaphysics, calling into question the legitimacy of subsuming such a variegated tradition under a single overarching principle.[59]

The rhetoric of the "end of metaphysics" does point to the danger implicit in the hegemonic functioning of principles. However, the para-metaphysical dimensions of the tradition suggest that the hegemonic functioning of principles is not as exclusively pernicious as the critique of metaphysics claims. The real danger lies with the outright rejection of principles. Once all appeals to principle have been abdicated, there is no place from which to critique the hegemony of principles. The fetishization of the hegemonic dimension of principles eclipses their critical capacity. Principles are critical both because they are required for thinking and because they provide a site from which to critically engage the manner in which their application always informs the economies in which they are deployed. Such critical engagement renders theory practical: what critique is to theory, transformative action is to practice.

The hegemonic functioning of principles is never merely a matter of theory, it also always sets power into play and determines the players related by means of that power. What has been thematized from the theoretical perspective as the hegemonic functioning of principles must be recognized from the practical perspective as their inherent normativity.

59. See Stanley Rosen, *The Question of Being* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). Rosen argues that Heidegger's account of the history of metaphysics is misguided when it locates its origins in the so-called "theory of Ideas": "metaphysics as we know it (but not necessarily as it ought to be known) is a product of Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition, not of Platonism" (p. 30). For Rosen the science of being *qua* being in Aristotle is often over determined by categories and predicative assertions — an over determination that has a powerful "metaphysical" history. Rosen also recognizes that "there is no single science of being in the Aristotelian corpus . . . but there is a science of being qua being that has determined the historical destiny of metaphysics" (p. 28). Since Rosen wants to sever the alleged identification Heidegger establishes between Platonic and Aristotelian thinking, his attempt to shoulder Aristotle with the tradition of metaphysics is understandable.

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Principles necessarily establish economies on the basis of values. To deny this normative role to principles by reifying them is to think action as operating within and being limited by social and political structures legitimated by those very objective principles. This conception of action collapses under the critique of metaphysics. However, to recognize the normative functioning of principles and yet to shroud it in an aura of mystery is to reliquish action to the mere play of force. This either fails to appreciate or intentionally obfuscates the transformation of force into the exclusive normative principle of action. When priniciples are reifed, action cannot be transformative. When mystified, action cannot be critical. In either case, critical transformative action is abdicated: what is to be done is always already what has been done.

The legacy of para-metaphysics suggests that to maintain the capacity to critically transform the very structures of power within which principles are always deployed, action must be thought as embedded in and informed by principles. Just as the emancipation of thinking is possible only when it apprehends its own immanent coersive character, so too the tranformative capacity of action first becomes possible when its coersive character is recognized. The coercion of action and thinking emerges as an inevitable result of the encounter between principles and the individuals they seek to determine. Both the history of metaphysics and the rhetoric of its end render it impossible to critically engage the hegemony of principles. The para-metaphysics that seeks to do justice to the individual provides a resource for thinking action as critical and tranformative. Action is critical only when in remaining accountable to the individual it recognizes its own normative function. This recognition secures action against the arbitrary—the mere play of forces—for critical action can only take place within an economy of already operative principles. Action is transformative when it vigilently holds open its own normativity to the encounter with the individual. This encounter is the irreducible origin of all principles, the site from which they emerge and to which they must remain accountable. To avoid succumbing completely to its inherent hegemony, critically transformative action must allow itself to be guided and determined by the individuals in the name of whom it acts. Without reference to the individual, critical transformative action becomes totalizing; without principles, it becomes arbitrary.

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Heidegger on History and Politics as Events[1]

Claude Karnoouh

Heidegger's politics have been subjected to numerous criticisms, most of them by mediocre scribes,[2] and they have been answered by some of the best minds of the century.[3] In the end, to summarize what Heidegger called this "great stupidity,"[4] one could go with what Peter Sloterdijk later discussed[5] as an "optical illusion," according to which the "Nazi revolution" is seen as a return to the "specific" (deep-rooted) and the "true" (authentic),[6] finally regaining, or rather reconquering, the spiritual *Heimat* after centuries of metaphysical and later techno-scientific wanderings.[7]

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1. Translated from the French by Julia Kostova.
2. For one of the worst instances of this, see Victor Farias *Heidegger et le nazisme* (Paris: Verdier, 1987).
3. See Jacques Derrida, interview in *Nouvel Observateur* (November 6-10, 1987); Gérard Granel, "Le guerre de Sécession ou tout ce que Farias ne vous a pas dit et que vous auriez préféré ne pas savoir," in *Le Débat* 148 (January-February, 1988), pp. 142-168, especially p. 152; Pierre Aubenque, "Encore Heidegger et le nazisme," in *Le Débat* 148 (January-February, 1988), pp. 113-123; Henri Cretella, "Le procès de la liberté," in *Le Croquant* 3 (Summer 1988); Leo Strauss, "Introduction a l'existentialisme de Heidegger," in *Commentaire* 52 (1990-91), pp. 767-778; and François Fédier, *Heidegger — anatomie d'un scandale* (Paris: Fayard, 1990).
4. In a September 23, 1966 interview, published posthumously as "Gesprächt mit Martin Heidegger," in *Der Spiegel* (March 1976), pp. 193-219.
5. Peter Sloterdijk, *La Domestication de l'Etre* [*Die Domestikation des Seins. Für eine Verdeutlichtung der Lichtung*] (Paris: Mille et une nuits, 2000).
6. The quotations are from Sloterdijk; included in parentheses are the terms usually used in the best translations of Heidegger.
7. Here it is superfluous to list all of the Eastern universities, philosophers, writers, painters and poets who for many decades idolized Joseph Stalin. Some of those who attack Heidegger most violently seek to forget their "blunder" by assuming a politically correct attitude, and thus gain the fame they could not achieve through the mediocrity of their works . . . . *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

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Heidegger's resignation after a brief stint (eight months) as Rector of Freiburg University, and the publication in France of his inaugural speech[8] was supposed to end this polemic, were it not for the fact that, on the pretext of anathematizing the "wrong" Heidegger, what was at stake was the dismissal of all critical reflection concerning the very destiny of the West.[9]

At any rate, the recent publication of the correspondence between Heidegger and Hannah Arendt[10] should have put an end to this stupid polemic. What follows is not a discussion of Heidegger and politics, but some aspects of how politics fits in the thought of the later Heidegger. At that point, after the "turn," he abandoned drafting the second part of *Being and Time* to focus on technology as the fate of modernity, and the poetics of the language or, in other words, on the final unveiling of the truth of metaphysics and on what remained the first and last place where Being could be discussed.

As for the classical definitions of politics, which can be found in any dictionary, none of them appear in Heidegger's work (e.g., as chapters). Thus, there is nothing like "the art of governing people." Instead, there is a long meditation on the meaning and nature of modern technology, which came to be known as *Gestell*, by which he means what the subject, i. e., the ego, places at the disposal of the will to know (a Nietzchean expression) or homologation (Vattimo's formula) in order to be productive. Since then, the *Gestell* has been seen as the deployment of the historical fate of an epoch of Being, i.e., modern metaphysics — the present one. In these texts, there are some direct and immediate political echoes, but never any intention to reconstruct some political system prior to *a priori* conceptions articulated around a metaphysics and a transcendant ideal meant as both beginning (principles) and end. Thus, there is no theoretical or apodictic political system, no wishful thinking typical of philosophers who, in general, have done nothing but legitimate the existing state of affairs. For Aristotle, it is the naturalism of the polis (an element of physis) that justifies the slavery necessary for the "democratic" functioning of a Greek city in crisis and close to its demise. For Thomas Aquinas, it is the deification of the natural originated by God, and therefore of the city

8. Martin Heidegger, *L'auto-affirmation de l'Université allemande*, tr. by Gérard Granel (TER: Mauvezin, 1988); in German, *Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität*, (Breslau: Milh. Gottl. Korn, 1933).

9. See Gérard Granel, "Les années trente sont devant nous . . . ." in *Etudes* (Paris: Galilée, 1995).

10. Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, *Briefe* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1999), in French (Paris: Gallimard, 2001).

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(as required by faithfulness to Aristotle) that orders and legitimates the feudal system as temporal power, and papal authority as spiritual power.[11] As André Tosel notes, for Kant, "the bad conscience of the juridical category" entails that, ultimately, the judicial order can only defend private property "as an essential relation to nature."[12] Thus the juridicial conceals this private property, as the organizer of the whole of the social and the political: "without the norm of the law, the paradoxical naturality of economics cannot function as a norm." By justifying all the policies that deploy economic liberalism and continually transgress the ethical limits that these "ethical reserves" had traced to politics, "the ethical reserve of public law is depleted."[13] Finally, for Hegel, the identification of the nation-state with the fulfillment of the world-spirit fully legitimates, as the consciousness of a particular historical destiny, first the Prussian and then the German longing for emancipation and then cultural and political domination — the *Kulturkampf.*

For Nietzsche, political critique and the critique of politics are present throughout his work, and seek to reground the spiritual order through return to Greek heroism. What is involved here is an already post-modern version of the restoration in that antiquity is offered among the elements of a multiple and multiform simultaneity of the present: what the German calls *Gleichzeitigkeit.* When Nietzsche compared the modern to a warehouse for theater accessories, the return he proposed does not escape this predicament: how to restore behaviors, a state of the spirit, a disposition of the soul of an era completely doomed without this restoration *de facto* placing itself in a game of multiple, simultaneous possibilities. Even if animated by the superman's will-power, the heroic thinker, history, or, better, what makes history, never reappears at the same level, other than as caricature, as Marx put it, or as simulacra, as Baudrillard has remarked, or, more precisely today, as commodities integrated in the business world. In fact, in a political context, this Nietzschean heroism would be good for nothing other than to strike the posture of a pseudo-hero. The only place where modern heroism could be deployed freely and powerfully (and at what cost!) is in the lives and works of certain artists, like Rimbaud, Van Gogh, Arthaud, Pound or Beuys.

11. Saint Thomas Acquinas, "De Regno," in *Sancti Thomae de Aquino Opera omnia,* Vol. 42 (Rome, 1979), pp. 414-471.

12. André Tosel, "La fondation de la catégorie juridique chez Kant," in *Démocratie et libéralisme* (Paris, Edition Kimé, 1995), pp. 91-119, especially p. 119.

13. This is still true today. The same criticism can be addressed at Rawls and all the neo-Kantians.

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In Nietzsche's works, there is an often violent critique of what he calls "a society of shopkeepers." As such, a further critique has to be directed to what this society is based on, or what could give rise to it other than business and what generates it: production exclusively for exchange, as the general organizational thought and action of socialization, of community- and institution-establishing relations regulating and guaranteeing all aspects of this commonality. This involves politics, the organization of work, productivity, distribution, instruction, the organization of knowledge, leisure,[14] the arts, i.e., what is understood today as cultural activities or, more precisely, *Bildung* and all that it entails. One can find already in Nietzsche (who may not have read Marx) an account, certainly non-systematic, but still rather precise, of the "fetishistic" role of the techno-economic and techno-scientific infrastructure, or, to put it in more psychoanalytic terms, one can see how the systematic organization of lust for commodities, manipulated by advertising, works as a machine simultaneously organizing and limiting desire (Deleuze's and Guattari's "desiring machine"). Following Ricardo, Marx elaborated the phenomenology of this machinery by documenting the social nature of all wage labor, its general monetary equivalent, understood as covering all human activities and exchanges, all capital and all profit — and therefore all commodities — thus revealing their "fetishistic" nature.[15] The world, or even better, what constitutes the world is nothing but "the sum of commodities produced in the world" (Marx); or, in Heideggerian terms, as a whole the world has become a commodity-world — the physis of modernity.

In any case, as the only logic of thought (Nietzsche against Hegel), or as the reification resulting from the instrumentalization of wage labor to generate only profits (Marx against Hegel), for both Nietzsche and Marx the ultimate solution for "saving" humanity from modernity's dehumanization is a messianic return to an ideal able to overcome economic determinism (perhaps more logico-technical for Nietzsche than for Marx). For Nietzsche, this is the ideal of heroism and of old spiritual values;[16] for Marx, it is the ideal of a proletariat embodying the true historical consciousness necessary to overcome alienation, and thus achieves the true world-spirit, the end of necessity, and the harmony of human relations: in a nutshell, the creation of a new ideal city which would put an end to

14. Gérard Granel, "Les années trente. . . ," *op. cit.*

15. Karl Marx, "Le caractère fétiche de la marchandise et son secret," in *Le Capital*, part IV of Section I of Book I (Paris, 1875).

16. Friedrich Nietzsche, "La philosophie à l'époque tragique des Grecs," in *Ecrit posthumes* (1870-1873), tr. by Michel Haar and Marc B. De Launay (Paris: Gallimard, 1975).

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history. In fact, both proposed a new political involvement as a new version of the onto-theo-teleology of Western history, i.e., as the history of the world, this time without God; or, as politics in a society where God, the creator of things whose laws are to be discovered through science, and who becomes increasingly distant from man and mundane life (Koyré), would have returned to earth under a name other than that of the Son, this time as a promise for vital spirituality regained on the logico-conceptual level and within the spiritual domain (Nietzsche), or as the hope for the elimination of eternal needs and of the alienation they imply (Marx).[17]

These are beautiful ideals and, above all, they imply a return to metaphysics: thrown out of the door, they come back through the window with the totalitarian temptations they create in simple spirits who have retained only the sociology lessons from its promises. This explains the manner in which theoriticians of National Socialism understood the superman; or the concept of a simplistic dialectic between base and superstructure for Lenin and other Russian theoriticians at the beginning of the 20th century, from Plekhanov to Preobrazhenski, from Trotsky to Bukharin. But in both cases it was a matter of constructing the figure of the modern worker, whether teutonic or Soviet.[18]

Initially, Heidegger did not seem to want to develop a radical critique of modernity. The deconstruction of the thinking of Being, for and in time, paves the way for a kind of renewal of metaphysics, by making it intervene in the historical determination in the naming of Being (finitude), by relating metaphysics to a history, and to a world it engenders, the Occident, i.e., what falls (from Latin, *occidere*, which is the root of the French *occire*, to kill), and what in German, like in old French, Romanian, or Hungarian call respectively *Abenland*, *couchant* or *ponant*, *apus*, *nyugat*, i.e., the decline, the twilight, the aging, but also what should also be considered to be the end in the realization of its totality: the acme. However, those who nowadays do not want to abandon metaphysics — perhaps out of fear of a majestic decline, this time not of the gods, but of philosophy — think they can grasp the sense of modernity, or at least that they can proceed with clairvoyance, while carefully avoiding going beyond *Being and Time*, which is precisely precisely where Heidegger, having experienced contemporary history in its totality as tragedy, developed the most radical critique of technical and economic modernity from the very beginning. In fact, to go beyond *Being and Time*, entails confronting what is

17. Kostas Axelos, *Marx penseur de la technique* (Paris: Minuit, 1961).
18. Gérard Granel, "Les années trente . . .," *op. cit.*

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presented as the unsurpassable horizon of Western mass democracy: nothing less, and even this is a lot, than the essence of capitalism and what makes it possible, i.e., the real phantasm of the infinite objectification of possibilities and of burning themselves out.[19] But, in order to do so, it was necessary to step back by means of a kind of retro-genealogy, to be projected toward the future. "It is still the beginning. It is not behind us like what took place long ago, but it stands before us."[20]

It is the experience of history as tragedy (what Nietzsche traced back to the very essence, to what generates human history) that Heidegger confronted before and during the time he was Rector. But what is the experience of history, what makes history, if not that politics expressing the violence of a society that has become unable to sustain (its crisis) the being-together which makes it into a community, i.e., the sharing of an identity while accepting differences, even if conflictual and thus regulated? Heidegger experienced politics in its essence: he came face to face with thinking confronted with those decisive events that generate history, "grand history," the one which transforms the world, which puts an end to the past and paves the way for the new.

This would have been understood if some spirits, blinded by the artificial paradise of metaphysics (the twin of reality), had not forgotten Machiavelli's old lesson: that the essence of politics is not the metaphysical ideal of an ancient or Christian city, presented simultaneously as the beginning (principle) and end toward which all human actions aim, but as a dynamic ensemble of power relations, of real conflicting socio-economic groups. Unfortunaterly, at the beginning of 20th century, too many people preferred to dream about impossible politics — "eternal peace" — rather than confront the reality of modernity as such. At the beginning of the 1930s, the crisis of Westen Europe was total; the old world, the Europe of the Enlightenment, had definitely died in the industrial battlefields of WWI, while the new, despite a long preparation, still sputtered in the violence of its pre-history. And it was in Germany that the crisis exploded most violently:[21] an unprecedented violence affecting society as a whole, it did not spare anyone and threatened the very survival of society as a political society.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Martin Heidegger, *L'auto-affirmation de l'Université allemande*, *op. cit.*, German p. 10, French p. 11.

21. This crisis is also the background of Carl Schmitt's thought, especially of his paradigm, the foundation of all politics, the relation between friend and foe. See Carl Schmit, *Begriff des Politischen* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlaganstalt, 1936); in French, *La Notion du politique. Théorie du partisan* (Paris: Calman-Lévy, 1972).

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It was neither the reading of Husserl nor of medieval philosophy that Heidegger was so fond of that shocked him. It was, first of all, his failure as Rector, following the sudden discovery that, despite the "movement's internal grandeur"[22] (with the Heideggerian idea of one feasible possibility among many, assuming that it stays within foresight and precaution) National-Socialism did not attempt any renovation of the German University. On the contrary, its real dynamics intensified the defects of a University that Nietzsche, in his time, had already denounced and criticized to no end.[23] At the end of the 1930s, the deconstruction of metaphysics, already started by Heidegger, concentrated around the work of Nietzsche — the first critical thinker of modernity. At any rate, it is not only the failure of his tenure as Rector that made him one of the most exceptional thinkers of the 20th century — along with Wittgenstein and, to a lesser extent, Benjamin and Adorno — but the recognition of the impossibility of any renaissance, restoration, and renovation of German, and thus of Western, *Bildung*. His encounter with Ernst Jünger's analysis of the modern man, in his totality, as a worker, played a determining role.[24]

It has been repeated *ad nauseam* how what Jünger had said and written about the experience of WWI was decisive for the metamorphosis of modern man: from a soldier he became military, from a civilian performing this or that task he changed into a piece of machinery moved by the dynamics of a total and general mobilization.[25] But what is less known is that Jünger and Heidegger were influenced by two works written by one of the biggest German capitalists, Walter Rathenau, owner of the famous factories AEG. Theoritician of the war economy, Minister of Industry during WWI, and assassinated in 1924 by a group of young officers of the Reichswehr,[26] Rathenau is the author of two very important works elaborating political,

22. The expression was formulated while he was Rector and after his death. Cf. *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (course given during the summer semester of 1935, published in 1952 by Max Niemeyer) and maintained in the interview with *Spiegel*, *op. cit.*

23. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die Zukunft unserer Bildungsanstalten* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1970). In French, *Sur l'avenir de nos établissements d'enseignement* (Paris: Gallimard, 1980).

24. Ernst Jünger, *Der Arbeiter* (Stuttgart, 1932).

25. Jünger's reflections on the worker and on general mobilization (1930), now in Ernst Jünger, *Werke*, Volume V (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1960) date back to the time of Fritz Lang's film on this same subject, *Métropolis* (1926), and a series of paintings by German expressionist painters such as Otto Dix, Georges Grosz and Max Beckman.

26. One of them, Ernst von Salomon, while imprisonned for complicity, turned this assassination and its preparation into a sociographic novel, *Die Geächteten* (Renbeek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1930; in French, *Les Réprouvés* (Plon, 1986), with its aporias, contradictions, antinomies, which cross political, social and cultural life of the Weimar republic.

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economic and legislative arguments to justify general and total mobilization in times of war or peace, in the name of the rationality of production, distribution, investment, profit, and the maintenance of the social order.[27] Thus, Jünger's analysis of *The Worker* led Heidegger to think about the essence of this modernity across a factuality always separated by philosophers from philosophical dignity, i.e., not in the direction of science (the object of all of their attention), but of technology for mass production, and thus of work. From there, he determined the essence as the essence of technology, as he stated it in a magisterial text published after Germany's defeat in 1946, the famous *Letter on Humanism*, addressed to Jean Beaufret, where he outlined what today is referred to as the second Heidegger. The transformation was complete, and the thinker of Being in and for temporality (the one who freed temporality from the pronouncements of ontology) became the thinker of the ultimate revelation of the truth of metaphysics in and thanks to technology.

Heidegger's original and decisive contribution to an understanding of modernity as a social, political, and economic system is that the simultaneous deployment of technologies, of science, of programming production and consumption (the new Holy Trinity: capital-production-profit) that he describes with the term "Technology" is not essentially technological. According to Hiedegger, Technology sinks its roots in the very heart of the history of metaphysics or, more precisely, modern metaphysics. The *Dasein* of this metaphysics — the total availability of Nature through the infinite objectifications of a subject immersed in the certitude of its own — was first elaborated by Descartes,[28] although, according to his interpretation of Aristotle and Plato,[29] it was prefigured long ago by the very emergence of philosophical questioning understood as a logic of propositions concerning the nature of beings and not, as for the pre-Socratists, as the poetic astonishment in front of presence as such, at the very moment of alethia. For Descartes, the announcement of the modern

27. Walter Rathenau, *Die Mechanisierung der Welt* (Munich: 1912); and *Die Neue Wirtschaft* (Munich: 1918). These works had a decisive influence on the concept of war economy formulated by Trotsky in 1919-1920 during the Civil War.

28. René Descartes, *Le Discours de la méthode* (Paris: Vrin, 1979), p. 128: "General notions concerning physics taught me that it is possible to obtain knowledge useful in life, and this speculative philosophy taught at school can be replaced by a practice through which, aware of the force and actions of fire, water, air, stars, skies and all other objects that surround us, as distinctly as we know the crafts of our artisans, we could use them in the same manner we use everything else and become masters and owners of nature."

29. Martin Heidegger, *Von Wesen der Wahrheit*, Vol. 34 of *Gesamtausgabe*, *op. cit.*; "Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit," in *Wegmarken*, Vol. 9 of *Gesamtausgabe*, *op. cit.*

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subjectum, of the *ego cogitans* in the certitude of the *adequatio res ad intellectum*, finds and expresses the total and permanent truth in the search of physical laws given in their representations as general mathematical laws. There is the essence and the origin, not of technologies, but of Technology in the sense that Heidegger attributes to it, or, if one prefers, of the creation of the world in the guise of the mathematical programming of objectifications. The unprecedented material accomplishments in terms of the sum of the world's products and those of science, the generation of modernity's physis, as well as the psyche of a man who, uprooted by total mobilization, considers himself to be modern, emerged from this representation and from the world-as-commerce which preceded Descartes,[30] but lacked the intellectual and technological means to unify the various spheres of activity.[31]

If this is the foundation of the modern world, if it relies on the total realization of metaphysics as Technology, then it is necessary to reverse the essential relation described by Marx between base and superstructure. One must then admit that it is the conceptual logic of the propositions concerning beings — representation as superstructure — that generates, deploys, and realizes this world of technology and production, i.e., the base, which eventually brings about a social and political organization responding to its needs, functions, injunctions, while simultaneously developing arguments to legitimate it. Then, it is not a matter of a dialectic between two poles, but of a much more complex game implying at least three poles permanently interfering and substituting their reciprocal positions according to the level of development, contextual predicaments, and existing dysfunctions. In short, the very history of the West unfolds in tandem with what are usually called crises. Then, it becomes clear that all of Marx's arguments have been exhausted when the economic and social relations of production are replaced with the historical analysis of production, whose source is the *Dasein* of the modern metaphysics of subjectivity, its mode of representation.

In fact, a simplistic mind could say that Marx has been put back on his feet. If that was the question, it would have been simply a matter of

30. See Fernand Braudel, *La dynamique du capitalisme* (Paris: Artaud, 1985).

31. Thus, statistics began to be used in mid-17th century Holland to determine the cost of insurance for ships and commodities based not only on the cargo's value but also on the time it took for transporting it; at the same time, in England, John Crawl, a friend and confidant of Hobbes — the first theoritician of the authoritarian state — began to use statistics in dealing with populations, i.e., demography.

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rediscovering Hegel. Or, rather, it is not Hegel that is rediscovered, but the coming-into-being of the world through the techno-economy understood as the realization-achievement of metaphysics. For it is not at all Hegelian — there is no *Aufhebung* but the exponential acceleration of what is already-present-as-possibility — to realize that if there is a world-spirit (which remains to be seen), it unfolds as the total technicization of the world as commerce: a truth confirmed by the fact that today it is possible to manipulate the techno-economic conquest of the genetic code of all living beings. It is not any more Hegelian to acknowledge how the realization of metaphysics has ended up suppressing that autonomy of politics it had previously constituted as a separate and specific activity, to the point where, in order to define man in his social life, Aristotle chose the expression *zoon politikon*![32] Even if practice sometimes contradicted it, the Greeks believed in the reality of this statement, because their ideal aimed at expulling from the *polis* the merchants whose activity they saw as reasserting the primacy of the private domain, i.e., of the domain of necessity, and therefore foreign to all political activity, which was supposed to be the concern of the public sphere free of all reference to needs, production, reproduction, consumption, etc. Since then, the animal that unfolds at the core of the Heideggerian analysis of the *Dasein* of the metaphysics of the subject could be named *zoon oekonomicon*.

Here, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's analysis of Nazism may not be entirely on the mark.[33] He sees Auschwitz as the "West's revelation to itself," but also the fact that Nazi politics was, after all, only the aesthetic configuration — the form, *Gestalt* — of a *Gesamtkunstwerke* concealed under the shield of the *techné*, engaged by a national-socialism turned into a national-aestheticism: Hitler viewed politics, on the one hand, as the reshaping of a people (in terms of this role understood as in-formation, called propaganda), and, on the other, realized politics in an action engendering the "*mise-en-scène* of the greatest war film ever made." Lacoue-Labarthe confuses the real decision, the real impact of the Nazi state, the real blood spilled in battles, the real torture inflicted in prisons, the bureaucratically administered death in the camps, with Hollywood fictions: the siege of Leningrad, the fall of Berlin, or Bergen Belsen are

32. There are still places in the underdeveloped parts of the world where people fight for strictly political reasons — places where the archaic vision of the political enemy has survived.

33. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, "La fiction du politique," in Martin Heidegger, *Questions ouvertes* (Paris: Osiris, 1998).

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neither *Le jour le plus long* (DDay), nor *Schindler's List*!

If the shaping of the people as the "art nouveau" of politics applies to modern politics, to Soviet as well as to Nazi radicalization, it can only be a matter of the metaphorical use of art in politics, as in the 16th century one talked about "the art of governing people." The Nazis did aestheticize politics (Brecht and Benjamin responded to this injunction by proclaiming that "art had to be politicized"), but they certainly were not the first. Not only had the Soviets already done that (with posters, decorated trains, sculptures, paintings, different instances of revolutionary propaganda created by the greatest Russian avant-garde artists),[34] but this play of truth and deceit between art and politics is at the very heart of politics. From the Greek polis to the time of the French Revolution, sculptures, paintings, triumphal arches, plays and musical performances exposed the tragic fate of people in relations with their gods, the divine punishment for their sins, the wills and hopes of the prince for the people, or — finally — the dreams attributed to people.

These representations were the work of great artists, from Sophocles to Ariosto, from Botticelli to Monteverdi, from Lully to Handel, from David to Rodchenko, *et al.* What drives Nazi politics understood in its deadly practice (because it was incapable of compromising) and, more precisely, what it exposes in its apocalyptic end, is the death of politics as secularized theology and its subversion by the techno-economic sphere. Or, if one dares say, the condemnation of Nazi politics did not play itself out in Nuremberg, the high point of its aesthetico-political representations, but definitely in the fact that the economic irrationality of its politics (its absolute racist transcendantalism) threatened the deployment of the techno-world of modernity. If Auschwitz as the industry of death is, according to Lacoue-Labarthe, the "West's revelation to itself," it is but a paraphrase of what Heidegger wrote after WWII regarding concentration camps and the industrial extermination of people: it is one of the forms taken by the unleashing of Technology. But, if the West has really achieved this self-revelation, it has yet to go behind itself. It is merely at the dawn of this achievement, which marks an ending. Thus, Granel's claim is totally justified, when he says that "the thirties are still before us." For, if one accepts Lacoue-Labarthe's formulation, it would be more precise to say that the aesthetico-political in the national-aesthetic version is one of the last versions of the theologization of politics (the other,

34. See Claude Karnoouh, "Le réalisme socialiste ou la victoire de la bourgeoisie," in *Postcommunisme fin de siècle Essai sur l'Europe du XXIe siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000).

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Sovietism, dissolved itself because of its inability to manage technological development), which was violently and definitively eliminated from the world scene. Henceforth, nothing should escape the "normal" representation of the world, the presently triumphant one of economo-aestheticism, of advertisement praising and equating the "merits" of commodities and "those" of politicians in search of an electoral mandate.[35]

Rereading today Heidegger's great texts where he developed his analysis of Technology,[36] one can see how his interpretations, both prescient and considerate at the same time of the essence of Technology, implied a permanent reflection concerning politics or, more precisely, the end of the autonomy of politics and of its dominion by the techno-economic sphere. One will find in these texts formidable judgements such as this: "The recoil to tradition, adulterated by humility and presumption, is not capable of anything on its own, except evasion and blindness before the historical moment."[37] This blind evasion is intensified nationalism. Struggling to recover a lost identity and authenticity, it merely participates in a general process of eradication, of the techno-economic splitting of people who have become Nations, each claiming their own productive State and making ever greater demands in the commercial world. In short, the raging battles for pretended national difference are but expressions of the inexorable advancing of modernization, and therefore of the homogenization of a world which operates in this manner.[38] That is why Heidegger sees in nationalism one of the best forms of subjectivity. Here, with a vocabulary which is different because it comes from a critical standpoint closer to the origin of metaphysics, Heidegger shares Adorno's and Horkheimer's negative and pessimistic evaluation of late modernity —

35. See Claude Karnoouh, "La fin des avant-gardes. Valeurs esthétiques et valeurs financières à l'époque de la modernité tardive," in *Adieu à la différence. Essai sur la modernité tardive* (Paris: Arcantère, 1993).

36. Martin Heidegger, *Brief über Humanismus* (Frankfurt a/M: Vittorio Klostermann, 1946); "Die Frage dem Technik," in *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Frankfurt a/M: Vittorio Klostermann, 1953); "Die Zeit des Weltbildes," in *Holzwege* (Frankfurt a/M: Vittorio Klostermann, 1956); "Zur Seins Frage," in *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Frankfurt a/M: Vittorio Klostermann, 1960); *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, in *Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 65, *op. cit.*,; and Reiner Schürmann's posthumous work, *Des hégémonies brisées* (Mauvezin: TER, 1996), Vol. II, Part 3, Ch. II, "Des doubles prescriptions sans nom commun (Heidegger)."

37. Heidegger, *Holzwege*, *op. cit.*, "Die Zeit des Weltbildes," in French, "L'époque des "Conceptions du monde'," in *Chemins qui ne mènent nulle part*, tr. by Wolfgang Brokmeier (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), p. 125.

38. Claude Karnoouh, "Le sujet de la modernité: société ouverte et logique du capital (à propos d'un article de Georges Soros: 'La menace capitaliste')" in *Postcommunisme fin de siècle. Essai sur l'Europe du XXIe siècle*, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-205.

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although, for the latter, it is a matter of a negative dialectic of reason implicitly suggesting that, under certain conditions, the process could be reversed through a double reversal, which would allow it to find the right path . . . This Heidegger did not believe even for a moment, as he strongly emphasized in his response to Jünger's "Zur Seins Frage." Nothing can provide any hope for the renewal of modern spirituality, for its salvation, as long as Technology has not been fully deployed, i.e., as long as its full truth will not have been exposed. He adds that this moment is still far, even undecipherable in its present embodiment, because this is still only the dawn of such an epoch. For the time being, all revolts and revolutions are for Technology but another way not only to exhibit its domination, but also to reinforce it by radicalizing it. Here one cannot avoid feeling the interpretative force of such an analysis when one considers, without prejudice or resentment, that history-making event, the *Ereignis*, called the Bolshevik Revolution and the history of the USSR up to its implosion. This is also why, like Jünger, Heidegger interpreted the two world wars, for which Europe was both the theoretical and practical center, as continental civil wars — wars where the violence unleashed by production was meant to resolve previous and apparently unresolvable contradictions.[39]

To remain deaf to the political meditation that Heidegger provides in his deconstruction of metaphysics[40] is to prevent oneself from understanding the unfolding of modernity before one's very eyes. It is tantamount to refusiong to admit that techno-science, in the form of capital, industrial production and the commercial world is the only horizon for people living during postmodernity. Finally, it means to be blind to the most dangerous challenge which awaits the people of tomorrow: the new biologically "perfect" anthropoid, i.e., genetically correct, being prepared by genetic engineering allied with the pharmaceutical and the chemical industry, computer science, artificial intelligence, etc.

Meanwhile, at the therapeutic level, in the research programs of various

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39. Eric Hobsbawn emphasizes how modern war is a factor of acceleration of production and consumption. See his *Age of Extreme, the Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1989* (London: Abacus, 1994). Hannah Arendt notes that the massive destruction of WWII has resulted in the much greater reconstruction, urbanization, and production required by the increasingly intense uprooting of the masses. See *The Human Condition* (1958), in French, *Condition de l'homme moderne* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1983), p. 370. Finally, one should recall that the US entry into WWII in 1941 contributed to pulling the country out of the economic crisis of 1929.

40. Cf. also the meditation on the meaning of the Roman *Imperium* in the course on Parmenide, Vol. 54 of *Gesamtausgabe*, *op. cit.*

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biological laboratories, depending on this new direction of knowledge, one will notice, badly concealed by a truly medico-scientific and pseudo humanist jargon, the installation of a genetic racism and a kind of eugenics based purely on economic rationality and the idea that progress consists in the total control of the genetic stock of all living beings. There is a synergy preparing the political totalitarianism of a real *Brave New World*, the embodied truth of Aldous Huxley's prophetic 1932 novel — a new and striking confirmation that the "thirties are still before us." Having gained total (i.e., totalitarian) control over biological life,[41] man will have lost his option over life and death, which is the measure of a freedom always possible.[42] This is the result of a promethean task that even the bloodiest totalitarianism of the 20th century was not able to accomplish. By reading, rereading, and meditating about Heidegger one can hear the murmur of the origins of our present world.

41. This biological-political power was first pointed out by Foucault in his courses at the Collège de France. See "Cours du 17 mars 1976," in *Il faut défendre la société. Cours au Collège de France, 1976*, in *Hautes études* (Gallimard/Seuil, Paris, 1997), p. 226. For a detailed analysis of this alliance, which presents itself nowadays as the most promising project of genetic engineering, see Jeremy Rifkin, *The Biotech Industry: Harnessing the Gene and Remaking the World* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1998).

42. Claude Karnoouh, "Technique et Destin," in *Krisis* 34 (Fall 2000).

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Symposium on Terror

Although *Telos* does not ordinarily deal with current events, the urgency of the present crisis calls for both responses and analyses — especially in light of the confusion it has generated. A few days after September 11, well before the launching of military operations in Afghanistan or even before the anthrax crisis, the following call for contributions to a debate on the subject was sent to the journal's editors and collaborators. The responses, both short and not-so-short, and written on the spur of the moment, even before the full extent of the crisis had become clear, have been assembled here to provide the basis for a more elaborate analysis of the new geopolitical situation in future issues.

Although it is becoming increasingly clear that Bin Laden is responsible for the new wave of terrorism, and that the US is itching to start bombing the Taliban and anything close to them, it may be time to ask a number questions about what has happened and what it means in geopolitical terms. Please try to answer the following questions, or others that you may want to formulate as a way to provide an analysis of recent events. If the responses warrant it, all of them will be published in the next issue in the format we have used previously, in the cases of Kosovo or the Gulf War.

Is the latest wave of terrorism qualitatively different from the classical variety? If so, why? Does it have to do with the new geopolitical power-configuration? Is it related to the weakening of nation-states because of globalization? Or is it more broadly a result of the failure of modernity?

If terrorism is warfare waged by desperate people with no other weapons at their disposal, why has there not been, at least in the American media, any serious attempt to try to locate who these desperate people may be, rather than focusing almost exclusively on rich and privileged religious fanatics such as Bin

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Laden (who could never have pulled it off were there no serious grievances to instrumentalize), or a demonized Islam, so much easier to dismiss and despise? Who are the most desperate people today? What groups or nations can trace this possible desperation to particular political sources, therefore remediable through political means, but so powerless as to be unable to make their case on a hypocritical international "public sphere" otherwise obsessed with human rights and justice? The Tibetans? The Iraqis? The Kurds? The Palestinians? The untouchables in India? Ethnic minorities in Africa, Asia or Latin America? And of all these groups, which one regards the US as its enemy or, more precisely, could possibly benefit from destroying the WTC and part of the Pentagon? How can such a destruction actually benefit anyone?

On a more general level, everyone seems to think that these are apocalyptic events. Are they? What does this new state of affairs mean from the viewpoint of Western civilization and its future? How are events of this kind going to effect not just geopolitical relations, but everyday life?

These are very difficult questions to answer, which cannot be dealt with in a short series of statements. Yet, it may be useful to try to speculate about possibilities and options, before the Baudrillards of the world try to show that none of this ever happened, that it is all a big put on, and that, in the long run, it is simply another symptom of the decline of Western civilization.

Those interested in responding should not worry about length or style, as long as whatever they write makes sense and provides minimally interesting analyses and some original insight. Since events will unfold very fast from now on, there will never be any "appropriate" time to reflect on these questions. See what can be done in a week-ten days.

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On 9.11.01

Tim Luke

This is a brief consideration of the terrorist actions in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia on 9.11.01. It situates their effects on the US and the world in the changing geopolitical conditions of the post-Cold War era. Rather than standing with the Right in seeing these violent events as another sign of some alleged "clash of civilizations," or siding with the Left in agreeing that the US finally got a "taste of its own medicine," these observations seek to grasp the new political realities. Otherwise, one will be swept away by fruitless arguments about who is to blame, who must pay, and why any measure of retribution is justified. Enough of this already occurs everyday in the media as editors and anchors busily package these events as "America's New War," "America Rising," or "Target America." Most of this media discussion does little beyond boosting the public approval ratings of President Bush, Mayor Giuliani, and Governor Pataki. Much more is at stake.

The Geopolitical Terrain

Some believe that destroying the World Trade Center and damaging the Pentagon were futile efforts to destroy the global economy and American military power. In some ways, they are right. World trade really has no single center, and the US armed forces can be controlled from many different points scattered all around the nation. Nonetheless, buildings are signs, as well as sites of wealth, power, and culture. So destroying or damaging any significant building becomes a successful first strike in a sign war against the nation that still dominates the means of communication and relations of signification at the dawn of the 21st century. Such acts are an ultimate propaganda of the deed, and those who committed them ironically know full well that the relations of signification will replay the images of them dramatically attaining deadly success over and over again, in accord with the contemporary media's prime directive: "if it bleeds, it leads."

The geopolitical underpinnings of 9.11.01 are not new: they are ragged contours cut by a unipolar correlation of forces that has emerged after the Gulf War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. The new world order of 1991,[1] however, soon devolved into carpet bagging, fiscal skullduggery, or benign neglect as many

1. See Michael Lewis, *Next: The Future Just Happened* (New York: Norton, 2001); and, *The New New Thing* (New York: Norton, 1999). Also see David Satter, *Age of Delirium: The Decline and Fall of the Soviet Union* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); and, Ken Jowitt, *New World Disorder* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

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individuals and firms in the US looked inward to seek El Dorado on the World Wide Web instead of dealing with the disintegration of the communist bloc. As a result, large swaths of the old "Second" and "Third" worlds decayed, disconnected, or devolved into demodernized chaos on a scale not seen since the 17th century as the Asian financial crisis of 1997, the Russian market crash of 1998, and the global slump of 1999-2001 deflated even the once robust economies of the Pacific Rim countries. While the American economy boomed throughout the 1990s, the Arab economies grew only 0.7% annually, and the Islamic states in one-time Soviet Central Asia actually contracted without big subsidies from Moscow.[2]

On one level, the terrorist networks behind 9.11.01 may represent a failure of modernity, which rarely has been acknowledged in the triumphalism of the past decade. In 1991, Washington oversaw the successful recapture of Kuwait from Saddam Hussein; and, a few months later, it watched in awe as the Soviet Union totally unraveled. During the intervening years, the US quickly washed its hands of many Cold War alliances and policies, which often had been connected to authoritarian allies relying on violent means. What had seemed necessary to resist the USSR was no longer required. At the same time, the US slowly turned away from many larger internationalist responsibilities that befell it as the world's sole remaining superpower. Instead of continuing to stand resolutely for unshakable modern ideals, like democracy, equality, and freedom, the US left tyrants like Saddam Hussein in place after Kuwait's oil was once again secure, permitted gangster capitalism to establish itself securely in places as varied as Russia, Columbia, and Romania, and temporized as horrendous civil strife racked areas in Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia. At the same time, Washington ineffectively brokered a fragile peace process between Israel and the Palestinians that only increased tensions between Jews and Arabs as more militant groups on both sides pushed more and extreme measures to attain their goals after the Oslo peace process.[3]

The difficult detail that most overlook in the putative triumph of "the West" over "the Rest" in the 1990s is how fully a modernity of failure can coexist beneath, behind, or beside the modernizing successes brought on by globalization through transnational corporate commerce. For every Hong Kong, Singapore, Frankfurt, or San Jose in the 1990s, there were five Groznys, Sarajevos, or Kinshashas. As the 21st century dawned in many places, some others slipped back into 16th or 17th century conditions of demodernizing disintegration. Large parts of the world now do not have effective territorial governance by modern nation-state institutions.[4]

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2. *Businessweek*, October 1, 2001, 47.

3. See Graham Usher, *Palestine in Crisis: The Struggle for Peace and Political Independence after Oslo* (London: Pluto Press, 1995); and, Nur Masalha, *Imperial Israel and the Palestinians: The Politics of Expansion.* (Herndon, VA: Pluto Press, 2000).

4. See Samantha Power, "Bystanders to Genocide," *The Atlantic Monthly*, 288, No.2 (September, 2001), pp. 84-108; and, Philip Gourevitch, *Tomorrow We Wish to Inform You That We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York: Picador, 1999).

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Many regions of the world have slipped back into early modern relations of trade in which black markets for gems, oil, weapons, drugs, timber or even people clearly eclipse the open exchange for legitimate goods and services.

The Cold War and its immediate aftermath was a time of immense failure for modernity in many regions of the world; neither liberal capitalist democracy nor state socialist people's democracy brought many modernizing benefits to millions of people. Instead, the Cold War years tallied up as decades of destructive civil war, starvation, and governmental collapse. For countries in which Bin Laden and al Qaeda now operate, as well as recruit many of their followers, these grim realities are inescapable. Modernity in these places has largely added up to little more than on-going civil war, arrested economic development, totally ravaged cities, intermittent border wars, deep agricultural stagnation, and persistent ragged famines. Local elites, Soviet advisors, and US AID experts all had a hand in these disasters, so, most importantly, modernity has failed miserably for decades to improve many people's lives in these strongly Islamic countries. And, in this chaotic flux of change, the modernity of failure suffered by many in these countries is easily blamed on a modernity of success enjoyed by the few, with the US at the top of that small pile of highly modernized nation-states.

The "coming anarchy" foretold by Robert Kaplan in the 1990s cannot be easily disentangled from the triumphalism of the US under presidents Bush and Clinton.[5] Bush the younger was elected in 2000 hoping to continue riding on those same waves of exceptionalist neglect, but 9.11.01 has brought him, his administration, and the nation back to earth. The "world" of the WTC with thousands of people working from scores of countries under America's aegis has been shattered by scores of people from "another world" shut off from world trade centers by thousands of grievances rooted in ethnic, ideological, or religious complaints about perceived American arrogance. Today's nascent world civilization carries the workings of both "worlds" within its civilized practices. This cannot be reduced to a "clash of civilizations."[6] Indeed, religious leaders from both Islam and Christendom have roundly condemned the acts of 9.11.01.

This day is instead one more outcome or expression of an odd anti-imperialist fringe that condemns what it regards as a failed modernity, resting on a commercial civilization rooted in cultural, economic, and technological clashes with everyone it seeks to vend its goods and services to anytime anywhere. 9.11.01 was a strike delivered in accord with a February 1998 *fatwa* issued by Bin Laden, his followers in al Qaeda, or "the base," and a few other fundamentalist groups in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, and Pakistan. This document essentially casts their fight as an anti-imperialist struggle against the US and its allies, who are

5. Robert D. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth: A Journey at the Dawn of the 21st Century* (New York: Random House, 1996).

6. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon ad Schuster, 1998).

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allegedly warring against "God, his messenger, and Muslims" by, first, "occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places," second, waging a war of on-going containment against Iraq, and, third, backing the state of Israel and the Jewish occupation of Jerusalem.[7] Western analysts may well dismiss the claims that the US looks like an empire to these people, but al Qaeda's cadres believe they are victims of such imperial adventures. Today, postimperialist myths of exceptionalism, Edenic isolation, and a ceaseless quest for growth in the US are colliding with the global quiddities of material limits in the global village in which some see an invidious empire threatening their faith. These new geopolitical realities need to be faced, and then responded to, rather than evaded in self-centered excess.

For the most part, however, an extraordinary moment for a new world order during the 1980s has been squandered. Rather than accepting the immense responsibilities of world superpower, the US shrank from them under both Bush and Clinton.[8] For all the talk about human rights, this empty political project has been pursued either weakly, as South Africa, Bosnia and Kuwait suggest, or not at all, as Rwanda, Chechnya, and East Timor illustrate. While touting the merits of a modern civil society, Washington often looked the other way as Serbs butchered non-Serbs in racial pogroms, the Congo erupted in murderous tribal warfare, the Taliban "Islamicized" most of Afghanistan, and autocratic gangsters reasserted themselves in Byelorussia, Romania, and Ukraine. Even though the US believes itself to be the world's preeminent power, many others believe it has shown little leadership over the past decade on global warming, the AIDS pandemic, world poverty, nuclear proliferation, and economic instability, beyond its propensities for fighting antiseptic air wars from B-2 bombers or fomenting technological upheaval with "dot com" capitalism. Some discursive democracy in the 1990s essentially has meant either the empty chatter of talk show gripe artists airing multicultural grievances at home or the feckless evasion of global challenges with nationalistic excuses abroad.

The Technics of Terror

Modern life, as people in Lower Manhattan and Northern Virginia know it, depends on a network of complex, interlinked technostructures. Whether it is a system tied to communication, nutrition, and transportation or a structure set in finance, housing, and medicine, ordinary technical artifacts and processes will always afford terrorists innumerable embedded assets that can be used for destructive purposes. Lethal capabilities can be created simply by contrafunctioning the everyday applications of many technics. Resourceful resistance fighters must create weapons from what is at hand, and the Internet, 24x7 finance markets, global airlines, agricultural fertilizers, rental trucks, and tourist industries readily, provide the organizations, intelligence tools, weapons, and/or soft targets needed

7. *The Washington Post*, September 30, 2001, B4.
8. See David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals* (New York: Scribner, 2001).

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for committing a terrorist act. Combining a fully-fueled wide body airliner with a kamikaze pilot clearly can create a strange new type of cruise missile, whose kinetic energy, chemical fuel, and symbolic impact can forever alter the world's air transport system, New York's skyline, and the exceptionalist myths of invulnerability that once flew over the US. Yet, this threat remains real as long as airliners fly, and gritty geopolitical conflicts produce more suicide plots.

Protecting against any future attacks, however, becomes a nightmarish defense problem once the generic liberal assumptions of rational, life-enhancing utility presumed by all modern technics are pushed outside in the daily equations of technological use. Many large technical systems become highly problematic, threatening, and uncontrollably dangerous if one repurposes their applications to cause havoc or harm rather than generate power or profit. The most relevant case in point is the American air transport system. Every day prior to 9.11.01, 35,000 to 40,000 airplanes took off and landed, which included 4,000 commercial flights, at 460 FAA-controlled airports to serve almost 2 million passengers.[9] A forewarning of 9.11.01 was uncovered in 1995 in the plot to hijack and/or bomb twelve US airliners in Asia and Oceania. On any given day, finding terrorist suicide pilots among nearly 2 million passengers aboard 40,000 planes and 4,000 commercial flights is nearly impossible; but each of these flights can become a terrorist-guided missile. What circumstances, then, lead toward this "guidance system" coming into play?

The *modus operandi* of the al Qaeda network, which several nation-states, allege are behind many acts of domestic and international terrorism during the past decade, displays considerable versatility and adaptability that probes for such possibilities in many places. Consequently, 9.11.01 is not likely to be repeated in exactly the same way. Instead, the next major strike will undoubtedly leverage another embedded asset in some other existing technostructures to raise havoc at home or abroad. Those in the US who cling to common liberal assumptions about everyone sharing their views on life, liberty, and the pursuit of property as "happiness" cannot easily accept that illiberal assumptions arise from other degraded lives, follow from defunct liberties, and rise from dangerous properties. Even those who believe in good and evil, and see 9.11.01 as an act of profound evil, profess shock at the viciousness of these deeds. Nonetheless, illiberal views of a miserable life made grand by a violent death are very real. Once formed, they can push a few toward darker ends of monstrous import for any who embrace them. Believing that "the time of play is past and the time of truth has come," as the letter written by the ringleader of American Flight 11's hijacking, Mohamed Atta, and found in his luggage detailed, the terrorists ruptured the liberal peace of the 1990s certain that 9.11.01 would be merely "a few moments between the beginning of the happy life and eternal paradise with all the righteous and martyrs."[10] These illiberal fundamentalist logics are very real, and quite powerful. Banning all

9. *The Washington Post* (September 12, 2001), p. A5.
10. *The New York Times*, September 29, 2001, p. B4.

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pocket knives on airlines will not stop hijackings by men like this any more than stricter gun control has halted murders in big cities.

Organized stateless violence emerged during the Cold War in wars of national liberation, narcocapitalist crime syndicates, ethnic secessions, and shadowy counterintelligence units. Tolerated by the superpowers from the 1940s to the 1990s, these entities often proved to be reliable tools in border conflicts between the capitalist and socialist zone — regimes that once were arrayed around Washington and Moscow. In the political vacuums created in far too many states after 1989-1991, however, these entities have acquired quasi-sovereign powers in far too many areas across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and even parts of the former Soviet Union. Consequently, one finds many small organized war machines, like al Qaeda, with varying levels of capability, but no real closure over entire territories and populations, demodernizing many places around the world in pursuit of contrasovereign illegitimate power.[11] There are new demodernized wildzones in which these stateless formations for organized violence play out their institutional quest for power on both a local and global level.[12]

Mostly dismissed as sources of minor turmoil when some of their first effects were registered as criminal acts in the truck bombing of 2.26.93 at the WTC, they now are regarded as sources of major chaos after the destruction at the WTC, Pentagon, and rural Pennsylvania on 9.11.01 was recast as an act of war. Indeed, the US has now entered into "a state of war" with "stateless warriors" — a situation that has not prevailed in the republic since its "civilizing campaigns" against Native Americans, the Barbary pirates, and Caribbean buccaneers in the 18th and 19th centuries. Instead of considering this condition a historical oddity, however, by labeling al Qaeda "barbarians," as President Bush did on 9.12.01, the US also needs to ask what strategic failures, inconsistencies or discontinuities so plague its global roles as the world's last superpower that such demodernizing tendencies are now becoming much more endemic on a global scale.

What is it about the 21st century that motivates so many radical Muslims to fight for return to the 7th century? Given Bin Laden's anti-imperialist thrust, one should not mechanically reduce al Qaeda to some sort of anachronistic throwback to medieval values. Modern life is rooted in choice, and the terrorists who were behind 9.11.01 consciously prepared, trained, and then chose to die in pursuit of political ends. As the letter left in the luggage of Mohamed Atta suggests, a section headed "The Last Night" states: "Everyone hates death, fears death. But only those, the believers who know the life after death and the reward after death, would be the ones who will be seeking death."[13] Choosing to affirm the depths of

11. Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War* (New York: Penguin, 2000).

12. See Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

13. *The Washington Post* (September 28, 2001), p. A1.

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faith with acts of deadly force is evil before both secular Western and Islamic morality, but it was consciously chosen by the hijackers. These existential decisions, in fact, are the sign to al Qaeda of a righteous quest for martyrdom.

Just as the extent of Washington's collaboration with Saddam Hussein from 1978 to 1990 has never been fully disclosed, because of Baghdad's former roles in the Wests resistance against Islamic revolution in Iran, the full measure of American support for "the Afghan" Arabs who now are al Qaeda during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan probably cannot be known.[14] After being left high and dry by the US once the USSR began to fragment, the many Algerian, Egyptian, Gulf, and Saudi Arabs who answered America's call to defeat communist invaders in Afghanistan became enraged in 1990-1991 by the massive American military build-up in Saudi Arabia. Seeing these moves as a Western attempt to occupy the holiest places of the faith, Bin Laden and his confederates have apparently spent the past decade infiltrating at least thirty-five countries to strike back against the US in particular and the advanced industrial West in general. Yet, the US does not really know how much of this may be true, and its counterterrorist efforts to date have been total failures.[15]

Al Qaeda, if it is indeed behind 9.11.01, is tied to the puritanical Wahhabi Islam followed by the Saudi dynasty, which has flogged this rigid dogmatic code in the face of its luxuriant excesses to maintain Riyadh's flagging authority at home and abroad. The radicals of al Qaeda in Algeria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia tried to oust their home countries' rulers in the early 1990s, but they failed. Thus, they turned to assailing the US, because it was the main patron of these more conservative regimes. Many had found their mission first as *mujahaddin* in Afghanistan fighting against the USSR. Once Moscow withdrew in 1979, they wandered, causing trouble elsewhere. Some were rumored to be fighting in Bosnia and Chechnya, but al Qaeda first operated more openly in Sudan, where Bin Laden had many business investments. After President Clinton's ill-conceived response to Khartoum for sheltering these radical elements, Bin Laden threw in with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Like many underground guerrilla or terrorist movements, however, al Qaeda's networks function in a very discontinuous and decentralized fashion as they develop their tactics, raise their financial support, and find followers.

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14. See John K. Cooley, *Unholy Wars Afghanistan, America, and International Terrorism*, Second Edition (Cherndon, VA: Pluto Press, 2000).

15. Reul Mark Gerecht, "The Counterterrorist Myth," *The Atlantic Monthly* 288, No. 1 (July/August, 2001), pp. 38-42, details the utter unpreparedness of the CIA for the conflict in the Middle East. As social science graduate programs have replaced foreign language requirements and field experience with more statistical language requirements and formal modeling expectations, the cadre of likely area studies experts has dwindled. Most CIA operatives live in the Virginia suburbs, do not speak Middle East languages, and rarely travel in the underdeveloped societies of the region they are assigned to know. As Gerecht recounts one new CIA case officer's observations, "operations that include diarrhea as a way of life" in the Middle East or anywhere in the world "don't happen," p. 40.

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9.11.01 was quite shocking in its scope and intensity, but it really should not be seen as all that surprising. After all, the WTC was the target of a terrorist truck bomb on 2.26.93, which failed to collapse the complex, even though it killed six and injured thousands. In many ways, this is when America's "new war" really began, and there have already been many other clashes with radical Islamic terrorist groups over the past eight years: in Somalia during 1993 al Qaeda-trained guerrillas stymied American efforts to capture Somali warlord Hussein Aideed during the US intervention in Mogadishu; in the Philippines during 1994 an airliner was bombed killing 1 and injuring 10 as part of a plot to destroy 11 US jumbo jets all around the Pacific; during 1995 an Islamic plot to assassinate Pope John Paul II was uncovered in Manila; in 1996 a truck bomb killed 19 US service personnel in Saudi Arabia; in Egypt, during 1997, 58 foreign tourists were killed at ancient ruins along the Nile; during 1998 the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed killing 224; during 1999 plots were foiled in Jordan and the US that aimed to disrupt millennium celebrations; during 2000 the U.S.S. Cole was bombed in Yemen's Aden harbor killing 17 American naval personnel; and, in 2001, the events of 9.11.01 have killed thousands in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Of course, these incidents are only those that are believed to be connected somehow to Bin Laden, al Qaeda, and its many allies.[16] Other radical Islamic groups can also be tied to violence elsewhere from 1991 to 2001.

Many see these incidents as a neo-medieval *jihad* that aims to topple the highly modernized Western nations for abusing and/or exploiting the nations of Islam, but they also can be seen as a very desperate response to the modernity of failure being brought to the poor and powerless by corporate globalism. On one level, modernity works well in the Middle East. Oil is pumped, shipped, and sold. In turn, billions in Western weapons, luxury goods, and films are also sold there. Despite pretensions to a simplicity of the *hajira*, fundamentalist Muslims buy AK-47s, cassette tapes, cell phones, and Toyota utes in the bazaar to make their orthodox order cohesive. On another level, however, modernity fails: only a few gain from this incredible wealth, while many more live quite miserable lives, blaming the West, as they have since the 18th century, for much of their misery.

Nevertheless, the al Qaeda networks are also the epitome of contemporary globalization. Whether it is the easy facility of these cadres with global finance, world travel or international communication, one must not mistake the cultural traditionalism of al Qaeda for some sort of technological unsophistication or political obtuseness. Indeed, the loosely articulated cellular structures of these networks are highly specialized "virtual organizations," pulling people, money, resources, and tactics from different places at different times into a single cohesive task performance team without necessarily following any overly centralized strategy. The conspiracy to organize 9.11.01 was pulled together transnationally in Germany, Great Britain,

16. See Michel Griffin, *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Taliban Movement in Afghanistan* (Herndon, VA: Pluto Press, 2001).

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the United Arab Emirates, and then launched in the US using activists from Egypt, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia. It appears there were no top managers in the US directing the events of 9.11.01. Once a follower apparently accepts the legitimacy of Bin Laden's 1998 directive "to kill Americans and the allies — civilian and military — is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do,"[17] then he is left to exploit whatever knowledge, tactics, money, and resources he can procure to execute this general task. Whether it is truck bombs, hijacked airliners, ship bombings, individual murders, or seizing symbolic buildings, global means of communication, organization, and transportation make it easier to refunction embedded technical assets as tools of terror in such loosely coupled, flexible means of destructive organization.

A Culture War in "America's New War"

In many ways, this current wave of terror is so terrific because it remains thus far anonymous. While the White House believes Bin Laden and al Qaeda are its authors, those forces essentially have disclaimed responsibility for 9.11.01. Terror in the past typically was committed in the name of a nation seeking nationhood, a revolution pushing for realization, or a faith expressing frustration. Even the madness in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia fit this model, and the U.S. could intervene in those circumstances, albeit often at great cost and with considerable loss of military efficacy, in a "policing" or "stabilization" action.[18] All of these forces might be involved in 9.11.01, but no credit for them has been claimed. Instead, these acts are now a strange species of stealth bombing in which the bomb is known, but the bombers remain cloaked in obscurity to prevent counterstrikes, raise the rhetorical heat, and preserve their freedom to maneuver. Because the US is the world's sole superpower, it makes eminent sense to strike here on its territory against all people who work and live there in support of the global economy. There are tremendous embedded assets waiting to be artfully abused, the media system willingly will serve as the PR office of the terror by putting its most terrible moments on continuous replay, and the familiar "day late, and a dollar short" defensive reaction of the US government can be counted upon to create as much, if not more collateral damage as the bombing did merely by preparing to stave off the unthinkable acts that already have passed. Remaining unnamed, unknown, and undetected simply supercharges this propaganda of the deed with even more energy.

Culture war rests at the core of 9.11.01, but it is not one between Islam and Christianity, even it can be tied to the incommensurability of secularism and devotion in many respects of everyday life. Liberal ideologies rest at the core of modern consumer society. Without the codes of conduct that rule everyday

17. *The Washington Post* (September 16, 2001), p. A8.

18. See William Langewiesche, "Peace is Hell," in *The Atlantic Monthly* 288, No. 3 (October, 2001), pp. 51-80, for discussions of how America's Balkan intervention has been pushing the Pentagon to its logistical and operational limits.

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human behaviors for autonomous rational agency, the technics that underlie market exchange, instrumental action, and personal happiness would grind to a halt. To live is to consume, and to consume is to live.[19] By these lights, few, if any, modern individuals can even imagine rationally and choosing freely not to consume or to die. Liberal forms of life assume an enduring preference for prolonging life and its various individual pursuits after variously flavored utilities. Consequently, the common sensibilities of the American public have been shocked from Guadalcanal in WWII to Hue during the 1968 Tet offensive in Vietnam to the WTC bombings in 2001 by forms of dedicated violence committed in pursuit of other "illiberal" visions of existence. Here, one finds other modes of social individuality that will readily put other collective goals far ahead of individual rights to consume, work, or acquire property, and the devotion to these ends is pursued to the death of those making these choices. Believing God, History or Nature is on their side, and that greater rewards await them in another world beyond this one, these "others" can willingly sacrifice themselves, their family, and their wealth to attain long-term strategic goals. While destroying the Pentagon or WTC might not seem to offer many strategic benefits, the audacious devotion to committing such violent goals always will first confuse and then shock liberal understandings of the self and society down to their core.

Therefore, any defense of ordinary liberal capitalist ways of life will always require an uncomfortable on-going effort to comprehend the radical indifference to its codes for acting and thinking. All too often it takes a final cell phone call to loved ones who relay the latest CNN updates about terrorist attacks elsewhere to awaken ordinary consumers to such foundational threats to their existence. Then, some readily rise to the call, even if it is too late for them. Radical Islamism obviously fits the profile for an illiberal otherness. Its advocates assert that a new world order tied to liberal capitalist values, and the American society and state that stand behind them, are threatening all of Islam. Hence, the most faithful are called to wage war to the death against this threat. Moreover, the US in Iraq, Serbs in Bosnia, Hindus in Kashmir, Russians in Chechnya, the French in North Africa, or the Israelis in Palestine over the past several decades can be seen as working in concert to destroy the faith. Dispossessed radical followers of small sectarian Islamic groups swear allegiance to "defeat the mightiest military power of modern times" by trusting, as Bin Laden maintains, how fully "your lives are in the hands of God."[20] This militant profession of religious faith keeps radical Islamic groups disciplined and resourceful, but these origins also highlight how easily everything has soured in the poorer, less developed regions of the world from Morocco to Indonesia as the peaceful followers of the faith, who do not

19. For a technology-based vision of this generic contemporary liberalism, see Lord William Rees-Mogg, *The Sovereign Individual: How to Survive and Thrive During the Collapse of the Welfare State* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997).

20. *Newsweek* (September 24, 2001), p. 44.

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concur with these worldviews, struggle to coexist with a fundamentalist Islam. Moreover, the generic forms of liberal capitalist life brought to millions by transnational firms now compete on the same terrain with al Qaeda not only in Egypt or Sudan, but also in Russia or Bosnia as well as Ontario or Florida.

In many ways, it is clear that this normalized generic liberalism at the core of modern markets, technics, and societies is what radical Islamicists reject. The "Occidentalosis" that Islamic critics and clerics have been decrying since the 1970s is not focused as much on the "Disneyfication" or "McDonaldsization" of everyday life that America has represented in many anti-globalization campaigns. Like the rich elites they detest in Amman, Cairo, or Riyadh, the middle-class Arab pilots in the 9.11.01 plot drank alcohol, enjoyed nightlife, and lived large on other people's money. Many of the police investigations conducted thus far into 9.11.01 show that the alleged terrorists' lifestyles were truly entwined in a remarkably "normal" level of typical suburban consumerism — cars, credit cards, kids, gym workouts, wives, technical schooling, vacations, rowdy barhopping. Those aspects of American life appear acceptable, if only to maintain deep cover as sleeper agents, but they were also important in sustaining the terrorists' everyday lives.

What this radical Islam appears more dead-set against are older liberal principles in American life that the Right and Left in the US are still contesting: the separation of religion and government, basic natural rights to life, liberty, and property, the emancipation of women — even the premises of market etiquette, the sanctity of contracts in commerce, or scientific reason. This cultural program is perceived by al Qaeda as a material threat, in the Prophet's homeland, and the policies of the Taliban's Ministry of Virtue and Enforcement of the Faith are dedicated to checking the spread of these modernizing practices on the ground in Afghanistan, much to the chagrin of the Afghan majorities who detest this radical sectarianism. These values sparked Bin Laden's *jihad* against the US, and these precepts are recognized as what globalization often portends for "the Rest" as they confront "the West." If the US truly wishes to resist this new opposition to "modern life," both the American Left and Right need to get past their current cultural spats over small beer, and decide which foundational practices in Western modernity are worth reaffirming. Yet, they must also be aware of how much those principles aggravate the anxieties of outsiders, who see their indigenous values smothered by a civilization of cultural clash that constantly inundates them with unpalatable changes. For many in the Islamic world, these taken-for-granted liberal values could improve the quality of their everyday lives, ranging from the education of girls and emancipation of women to the reduction of official corruption and governmental repression. Of course, Islam can coexist, and has done so in the past, with scientific skepticism, commercial honesty, the freedom of women, basic natural rights, and a separation of religion and state; it is mostly religious fundamentalists in Islam who assail these principles. And, as the Reverend Jerry Falwell so artlessly illustrated when he interpreted 9.11.01 as God's retribution against America for

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being a nation of sinners, these illiberal tendencies also plague Christianity.

These strikes on the Pentagon and WTC are hardly apocalyptic events, even though the American media drone on as if the destruction wrought upon these iconic buildings will mark a sea change in Western civilization. Of course, if such assertions are repeated often enough, then many people might come to regard them as true in a cycle of self-fulfilling prophecies. This outcome may well follow from 9.11.01. There is a frightening insularity shared by most average American consumers as they buy more and more of the world's product at their local Walmarts, while remaining utterly clueless about how those goods are so abundant, cheap, and endless; why their credit is so steady, sound, and bottomless; or whose welfare elsewhere in the world is not so solid, certain, and strifeless. As long as major media outlets continue to replay the explosive impacts of airliner crashes on the WTC, the apocalyptic strains of 9.11.01 will continue to shake consumer confidence and public security, which is precisely what the terrorists had hoped to achieve with this propaganda of the deed.

Apocalypse should be understood instead as a world-ending catastrophe; and, in a sense, one world might have ended — the world of exceptionalist American smugness about being safe from foreign threats, secure in the hands of complex technological systems, and stable before the onslaughts of any foreign threat. Rather than apocalypse, these events are instead instances of a clever, but still low tech iconoclasm, landing blows on a few key icons of American power and wealth. The iconoclastics who succeeded at crushing these symbols did not materially lessen that power or wealth, but they did crack a few important icons, like American invincibility, industry, and invention simply by putting ordinary inventions and industries to other insidious uses for which they were not designed.

9.11 and "The 911 State": A New Cold War

The geopolitical balance of this new war is unusual. A $10 trillion economy in the US is pitted in the first round against a complete economic basket case — Afghanistan — whose main source of income is opium farming, and where nearly 30% of the population depend on international relief agencies for food, most of which comes from the US. Almost 300 million Americans face about 30 million Afghans, and Washington's Star Wars-era military forces are well equipped to cope with the Taliban's leftover Cold War-era Soviet arms. Nearly 5,000 people died at the WTC, but not all of them were Americans. In fact, they came from 78 different countries. The biggest one day death toll of Americans from violent terrorism in US history has proved equally true for Great Britain, Canada, Japan, Chile, Colombia, Australia, Pakistan, and many other countries. Consequently, the NATO countries, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and tens of other nations are lining up to aid the US, including Russia, China, and India. No nation recognizes the Taliban except Pakistan, and no nations admit to aiding Bin Laden and al Qaeda. The Taliban probably will resist fiercely, but this is what President Bush needs.

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Before 9.11.01, the world was ignoring Washington's efforts at resisting the Kyoto global warming accords, dismantling the 1972 ABM treaties, and touted more NAFTA-like trade pacts. After 9.11.01, a new enemy is producing a measure of compliance for the White House not seen since 1947 at the dawn of the Cold War with the USSR. Indeed, 9.11.01 has evoked a new national emergency, which provides the pretext for "a state of emergency," or "a 911 state," to fight a shadow war against invisible enemies on unknown fronts, possibly for decades.

An Afghan collapse, Bin Laden captured, and radical Islam eradicated will not sustain "America's new war," and total victory for Bush before 2004 could mean big trouble — just as it did for his father in Kuwait during 1991. An elusive Bin Laden with ever-present signs of al Qaeda subversion at home and abroad are precisely the tonic that the times demand when President Bush and his national security team assess today's threat environments. Nonetheless, the first battle in this new war was a catastrophic defeat for the US. The whole terrorist budget for 9.11.01 could have been as little as $500,000, which is an astounding geoeconomic reality pitted against the estimated $60 billion in direct and indirect losses from the attacks of 9.11.01, the $140 billion in federal stimulus packages to rev up the US economy, the $1.4 trillion in stock declines the week after the bombings, and the 150,000 jobs cut in the wake of these incidents.[21]

9.11.01 at the WTC cannot be forgotten as easily as the 2.26.93 attack was. The ordinary architectures of modern life make such calamities possible; it only takes slight efforts by a few clever zealots to turn common conveniences into tools for utterly uncommon outrages. In the aftermath, one hears of the FBI discovering persons with Arab names checking out crop dusting planes in Florida, getting HazMat licenses in Pennsylvania, and lurking about chemical plants in Texas. This will continue, because a globalist economy simultaneously creates possible weapons as it angers possible enemies. Here, the on-going processes of globalization as such, and the persistent application of neoliberal ideologies of globalism *per se*, will certainly continue creating new resentments against the US and the West. Furthermore, a feckless GOP administration whose agenda had been tied to slap-doodle economic restructuring now has resurrected Cold War era logics of enemy-definition, threat-containment, and defense-mobilization on a scale that al Qaeda or whatever groups are behind these strikes could not have foreseen before 9.11.01. In his first full Cabinet meeting following the attacks, President Bush reaffirmed the significance of winning this "new war" on global terrorism as he proclaimed: "this is the purpose of this administration."[22]

What was rooted in the old realities up to 9.10.01 now has found fresh projects in the new geopolitical realities. Promising to go anywhere anytime to fight any terrorist force, the new Bush administration is reimagining global terrorism as a foe worthy of permanent war. At this juncture, the war is most a *Sitzkrieg*,

21. *Newsweek* (October 1, 2001), pp. 49 and 55.
22. *The New York Times* (September 22, 2001). p. A1.

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but Operation Enduring Freedom will require many moments of *Blitzkrieg* to attack America's still nebulously defined enemies. The beauty of this war for Bush is the blank check already written by Congress for a 911 state to fight unknown foes, off in the dark, beyond the reach of CNN cameras, anywhere the threat is discovered until the enemy is brought down "dead or alive."

President Bush has claimed the war on terrorism will be "a lengthy campaign unlike any other we have ever seen," but this is not defensible. In fact, he has drawn the blueprints for a war just like the one declared by President Truman in 1947 on communism. The outcome of the Cold War has been seen as one of liberation in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and this new Cold War cannot be won in the Middle East, or all of Islam for that matter, unless Washington thinks in comparable terms of liberation, rather than merely protecting its oil supplies and Israel. To say, as President Bush did to a joint session of Congress and the American public, that al Qaeda has forsaken "every value except the will to power," and follows "the path of fascism and Nazism and totalitarianism" is one thing, but many in Islam and the world at large will not back the US unless it truly approaches the war of terrorism as "civilization's fight," or "the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom."[23]

This search for a "new enemy" in the register of grand Cold War-era struggles has been an on-going project in the Pentagon since 1991. Saddam Hussein, China, narcocapitalists, and post-1991 Russia have all failed the test, but the awesome evil of 9.11.01 allows radical Islamic terrorism to easily play this lead.[24] Where the war will be fought, by whom, and at what cost remain to be seen, but life begins in the first American war of the 21st century under its new 911 state with Bush having the highest approval ratings of any US President ever, Congress declaring an undeclarable war with a very generous initial $40 billion credit line, NATO invoking its collective defense charter for the first time in its history, scores of nations from Great Britain to Kazakhstan pledging full support to Washington for the fight, and young Americans flocking to the flag at rates not seen since December 1941. For those who attacked the US on 9.11.01 as the homeland of "a rogue superpower," these new geopolitical realities will not be easily ignored. Yet, for those rallying to the US flag, the costs of the last Cold War in people and resources also should not be forgotten. Bin Laden, al Qaeda, the Taliban, and Saddam Hussein are all creatures of the Cold War, who once were on the American payroll to fight the Soviet Union, end corruption and anarchy in Afghanistan, and/or oppose Khomeni's Iran. Rather than trusting entirely in the US Marines or stealth bombers, the US also must ask how much the contemporary globalist systems of political economy and cultural production, which America mostly still anchors, are behind these violent conflicts the nation currently faces.

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23. *The New York Times* (September 21, 2001), p. B4.
24. See Chalmers Johnson, "In Search of a New Cold War," in *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 55, No. 5 (September/October, 1999), pp. 44-51.

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The Changing Character of Terrorism and its Implications

Teodoro Klitsche de la Grange

I

What is most striking about the September 11 catastrophe is the lack of any clear and public demands. To attach demands to war acts is normal in partisan wars and in terrorism for two reasons: a) it demonstrates one's ability to hit and destroy, i.e., to have power; and b) it constitutes a prerequisite for gaining legitimation in order to negotiate — the kind of negotiations that transform the partisan or the terrorist into a political interlocutor (in the full sense of the word) with whom it is possible to end the war and work out a peace.

Actually, this second aspect generally requires that the partisan or terrorist movement, usually the revolutionary party, constitutes an embryonic order aspiring to transform itself into a stable and regular order — a state (or something similar such as, e.g., the Palestinian Authority) — or at least to modify the character and the material, even more than a formal constitution of a state. The aspiration to become a state or to modify it implies a relation with the population and, to a lesser extent, with the territory: a relation meant at least to gain a minimum of consensus as well as to generate some fear. These are the kind of things brought about by spectacular and "signed" actions.

The lack of demands raises doubts concerning this new terrorism's elevation to the status of a "foe," and at the same time confirms this new terrorism's distance from the land: from a limited and inhabited territorial space to be simultaneously defended and controlled. Here, the partisan's "telluric" character seems to be lacking. Mao-tse-dong used to summarize the relation between the people and the revolutionary army by comparing it to a man's two arms — an extreme but coherent formulation of the concept of nation. This new terrorism lacks one arm.

II

The new geopolitical configuration of power — with the US as the only superpower — has provoked two salient effects: a) it has destabilized even more the relation among contenders. This implies a destructive "qualitative leap" to fill, at least in part, the gap; and b) the more limited possibility to exercise any control (the possibility to integrate terrorist movements) with respect to previous ones, provided by their reference to a "third party" — a powerful and credible antagonist to the US, which, because indirectly responsible (precisely because it is a

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state) tended to avoid or limit more catastrophic and "illegitimate" actions, thus conditioning the revolutionary subjects. Here, concepts such as theater of war, front line, zone of operations, typical both of conventional conflicts and, to a somewhat more limited extent, even of partisan ones, are swept away by the absence of political (and juridical) limits and by the "planetary" character of the theater of war, which rejects the traditional distinction of "limited" warfare and even those, to a lesser extent, of 20th century partisan warfare.

III

Globalization tends to weaken the nation-state. It remains to be established how it can affect terrorist movements other than through the lessening of controls, due to the greatly increased movement of men and commodities. More decisive yet seems to be the other aspect of globalization, i.e., the planet's "unification" by means of a culture, an economy, and an hegemonic state — a process that triggers reactions on the part of "regional" cultures. The planet's globalization is not, as one may surmise by reading the media, a novelty traceable to the last years of the 20th century, but begins with the discovery of America and the "opening" of oceanic routes: at least from the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the next, there were the first instances of reaction by other regional cultures. The "closing" of Japan at the beginning of the *shogun* Tokugawa and the more or less contemporary expulsion of the Portuguese and of the Jesuits from Abyssinia provide the "model" of the rejection-closure reaction. The other kind of reaction, the one of emulation-assimilation, came a little late in history, but has generated famous modernizing figures, from Peter the Great to Mehemet Ali, from the Japanese oligarchy of the Meja epoch to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. This has been demonstrated clearly by Toynbee; and even Spengler, within the frame of his philosophy of history, has paid much attention to relations among various regional cultures. Thus, it is not surprising that, then as now, the modernizing elites of "dependent" cultures had to confront strong internal oppositions, mostly armed, in imposing new models of social organization. Occasionally, the latter have swept away the former, as in the case of the ayatollah in Iran. Nor is it surprising that the most conflictual aspects between the expanding culture and those threatened, both socio-cultural and economic, are ways of living and social organization, rather than (other than marginally or secondarily) a mode of production.

In a way somewhat different from how Marx put it, the cannons that brought down the Chinese walls were not loaded only with cheap commodities, but also with ammunition rather diversified and much less appreciated: the products of Western rationalism and civilization, from modern science to Roman Law, from Cartesian doubt to Leonardo's machines, from human rights to legal-rational administration. The double cultural-economic track along which travelled the unification of the *ecumene* was already prefigured in 1539 in Francisco de Vitoria's *Relactio de Indis*: in identifying the *tituli legitimi* to the conquest of the new

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world. He found them through the mediation of "just war" (*justum bellum*), whereby it was possible to carry out a conquest against the Indios if they opposed the execution of certain rights, the most important and decisive of which were the *causa religionis christianae propagandae* and the *jus commerci*: religious and commercial exchanges. In broader terms, it was a matter of culture and economics.[1] Thus, it was not an accident that missionaries and merchants were the first targeted for expulsion by the *shogun* as well as the *negus*.

In this sense, the terroristic reaction, more than a failure of modernity, constitutes its limit (a limit that, to the extent that it presents universalistic aspects, can also configure a partial failure), but it is necessary to consider that, at any rate, it translates into free zones — "black holes," even if large ones — within an unprecedented planetary expansion.

III

Globalization — and the emergence of a single hegemonic super-power following the end of the Cold War — constitutes a novelty, also historically unique, so much so that it has not yet been fully articulated, even in the troubled 20th century. Not even representatives of *l'esprit de conquête* such as Napoleon or Hitler had gone beyond the attempt to create a (stable) hegemony over Europe, i.e., a regional political space, no matter how important that may have been. In *Mein Kampf*, the colonial policies of Wilhelm II are derided and dismissed in favor of territorial acquisitions in Europe; the same goes for efforts to aid colonial peoples (such as those of India and Egypt) struggling against the British. *Lebensraum* was a regional space. Even Mao-tse-dong, in a poem, expressed his support for a division of the world in order to maintain peace, with a *itio in partes* of the planet into macroregions, one of which would clearly be under Chinese hegemony.[2] If in the system of states as configured by "classical" European political thought, one substitutes imperial spaces (even if regional) the political pluriverse remains (even with a reduction of political subjects "*pleno jure*," i.e., with unlimited sovereignty).

What renders absolutely new today's situation is that the political (and cultural) pluriverse is turning into a universe. Carl Schmitt located as the main feature of partisan wars (and of the partisan) in their the irregularity, contraposed to the "regularity" of the system of states and of their armed branches, the modern armies. Concepts such as those of regularity/irregularity are to be understood not so much as adherence to rules functioning as norms, but in relation to an ordering which *reincorporates* (generates, modifies, suppresses) the norms, following Santi Romano's well-known account. In the notion of ordering, which is first of all a *Dasein* (something that exists), i.e., something existing concretely, the spacial

1. Francisco de Vitoria *Relectio de Indis* I, 3, 2-12.
2. Cited by Carl Schmitt in *Theorie des Partisanen*, Italian translation (Milan, 1981), p. 46.

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aspect, along with other concrete elements, broadly determines its character and connotations, with particular regard to effectiveness and efficacy. Space characterizes the intensity and extension of power: in a planetary state or empire, it is much more difficult to disregard the central government's commands (and their execution) than in a pluriverse — if only because the territory of other existing states or empires cannot become the refuge or "sanctuary" for opponents. In a planetary hegemony, there is neither sanctuary nor the possibility of exile.

The answer to planetary "regularity' (i.e., the effective order) can only be an equally absolute "irregularity" that does not recognize any of the distinctions of classical warfare, between peace and war (there is no declaration of war) or between *justus* or not so *justus hostis*, between civilians and military, between a war theater (and zones of operation) and others: the whole planet becomes a zone of operations, as the object and space of the new political power, which the irregular fighter opposes.

Not even definite *jura belli*, such as that of prey, which tend to relativize warfare or at least the act of hostility, are concretely applicable in a type of war and of hostile acts such as terroristic ones, even more so in absolute ones. The kind of sacking which satisfies the aggressor's greed, while generally saving the life of the losers, is inapplicable in this type of conflict. Thus, the only objective becomes the destruction of life and of the enemy's wealth, without regard to those previously mentioned distinctions.

IV

"Absolute" irregularity is something apocalyptic, contrary to Western thought and policies' broadly reiterated efforts to *relativize* wars, by means of the four conditions of the *bellum justum*, long since identified during late Scholasticism by Suarez and Bellarmino.[3] In this sense, it is extraneous to Western civilization. Given this state of affairs, especially the fact that there have been no demands attached to the September 11 catastrophe — something that has generated uncertainties concerning the real enemy, especially its objectives, it is difficult to make any predictions.

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3. See Roberto Bellarmino, *Scritti Politici* (Bologna, 1950), p. 259; and Francisco Suarez, *De Charitate*, disp. 13, *De Bello*.

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On Violence and Terror

Juan E. Corradi

The 21st century has brought together two trends that have been long in the making: violence as a subliminal *modus vivendi* of postmodern societies, and terrorism as a global explosion of partisan war. The two trends intersected dramatically on September 11, 2001, when a small group of barely armed terrorists shook the confidence and threatened the security of the most powerful nation on earth. The terrorists made everybody harrowingly aware of those trends, and brutally unveiled an aspect of globalization that was occluded, if not ignored, in discussions about global society, which delved benefits and risks, not into devastating attacks. Standard notions of state, international relations, and war became suddenly inadequate, while more recent concepts, such as globalization, networks, interdependence, etc. were not sufficiently refined to capture the crisis. What some had seen as the dawn of a benign global civil society showed another countenance — an equally rising global evil society. It is high time, therefore, to revisit the notions of violence and terror in light of these events.

"Violence" refers to a series of events and behaviors that in different contexts go under the rubric of "war," "persecution," "punishment," etc. A search for the concrete core of such events points to the social organization of human destruction: its means or "arsenal;" its structured forms of dispensation or "mode of destruction;" and finally, the imagery associated with destruction or "talk."

For a long time now, violence has been fashionable in the West, but also strangely unreal. During the decades of the Cold War, the landscape of violence in rich societies had two borders: the nuclear bomb on top, and the mugger's knife at the bottom — with occasional irruptions of limited wars abroad (mostly by proxy) and riots at home. Within these boundaries, society was largely peaceful. At the same time, "violence" was quite familiar as a theme of talk and of enacted imagery. Societies have seen themselves as suffering from violence, as besieged by violence, as tempted by violence, as victimized by violent enemies. Violence has been a common mode of referring to the social and political fields. For many, the present epoch has been highly violent in the same sense in which it has been highly "sexual": it has *talked about it* incessantly. To paraphrase Foucault, violence has been "*mise en discours*." Violence is not strange, but it has been teased like sex in pornography, and managed to keep it at arm's length. Now, violence manifests itself in a different way, as a hard fact within. The irruption of terrorism has modified the landscape. Exit the Cold War; enter the Hot Peace.

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Ways and Means

The individual and combined firepower of today's armed forces is qualitatively and quantitatively without common measure with all previous history. The capacity for global self-destruction is spectacular. Nonetheless, both at the nuclear and conventional levels of weaponry, the monopoly of the means of destruction remains with nation-states. Below and between the nation states, however, there is a rich variety of powerful means of destruction that is accessible to non-governmental organizations and individuals. Moreover, the complex organization of industrial and post-industrial societies makes them vulnerable to the uses of means of destruction that are in the public domain.

Contemporary societies make instruments of destruction available as so many other commodities and make themselves, by that token, vulnerable. The more advanced and the freer the society, the greater the availability of do-it-yourself destruction. The means and opportunities have multiplied. The motives have evolved as well. Destruction is a way to short-circuit the complexity of modern society, and in a typically "postmodern" mode, to gain visibility, and to constitute oneself as a subject of interaction. The pervasiveness of bureaucratic and post-bureaucratic management has made domination "impersonal" — in Hannah Arendt's words, the "rule of nobody." Under such conditions, violence appears as a means to dramatize grievances, as a form of identity formation subtracted from the circuits of economic production and political representation. In this sense, contemporary societies confirm the sick premonition of the Marquis de Sade in his pamphlet "*Encore un petit effort, Français, si vous voulez être Republicains*" — an early recipe for mayhem.

Although, in the last analysis, the capacity for "ultimate" destruction rests with the state, this monopoly is not well protected by symbolic or sacred barriers. The erosion of traditions, of sacred modes of legitimation, and of time-honored taboos has not been followed by legal-rational boundaries and principles without an equivalent stability and distinctiveness. The more complex and dynamic society becomes the more "provisional," "negotiable," and temporary legal regulation becomes. Monopoly is not a matter of being different: it is a matter of just having more. This means that, although basic relations of power may be highly stable, the impression of a diffuse symbolic violence might nevertheless increase. In societies where power (defined in classical terms as the capacity to act in concert) has been eroded, violence occupies center stage as a fitful mode of social exchange.

The experience of South American terror in the 1970s is instructive. Violence became general, banal, and ineffective (from the viewpoint of the "seizure of power"). It was both unproductive and consequential. The states responded in kind, engaged in violence like the other armed bands, and "won ugly" in the end — without reconstituting *legitimate* power. The mode of destruction displaced the mode of production and the mode of interaction on which previous notions of "development" had been based. To summarize: the apparatus of destruction (the

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arsenal) is as ubiquitous as technology: it is rationalized, technical, and professional, with degrees of accessibility very similar to those of other forms of technology and capital. Technology makes it virtually impossible to distinguish between "peaceful" and "destructive" research and output. It is relatively easy for contemporary societies to slip into a mode of destruction. Getting out of it is difficult, because that requires symbolic, moral, and political resources quite different from mere technical, modern-rational expertise. In a nutshell, contemporary violence, far from being a midwife of new social systems, is a state into which existing systems easily lapse. Without affecting their reproducibility, violence makes them function in another mode which, according to its scope and intensity, can be a "mode of security" or a "mode of terror."

As for the source, violence comes not from specific cultures and societies, but from the dissolution of cultures and societies. Its roots are in uprootedness; its home is homelessness. Despite its name, *Al Qaeda* is no base. As so many other things, violence today is transnational, transcultural, and post-political: a disquieting component of postmodernity and globalization.

The Illusions of Modernity

There is a tradition in historiography — one to which classical 19th century social theory is beholden — that considers civilization as an unfolding process that tames and contains violence. Despite its own spotty record of wars, civil conflict, and revolution, the European 19th century had an unshakable confidence in ultimate peace and harmony. This was the ideal of modernity rooted in the soil of 18th century enlightenment. It was a fateful paradox: modernity created the conditions for the diffusion of violence, while dreaming of its elimination.

The modern faith in peace took various forms. On the one hand, there was a widespread belief that reason had at long last been unfettered and that the progress of knowledge and its diffusion would in the end triumph over prejudice and impulse. On the other hand — and especially for those who regarded reason more as a supportive than an active faculty — the new social sciences focused on those practices that, regardless of merit or intention, produced and sustained solidarity and harmony in the body social as a whole (mutuality, sympathy, division of labor, and exchange). For this line of thought, order in human affairs depended less on the harshness of authoritarian will than on the routine of production and on the sweetness of knowledge and commerce. Herbert Spencer, for whom the ascendancy of industrious over militant societies was irreversible, summarized the insight in the tone of a slogan. But the insight can be found, almost without exception, in the writings of all the other pioneer social scientists. In this respect, it mattered little that these thinkers were conservative or revolutionary, technocrats or democrats. Classical social science did not equip itself to treat violence except as an exception, an atavism, or pathology. In this, social science missed the boat.

The new institutional arrangements that were deemed sufficient to contain

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violence were located both in civil society and in the state. On the level of civil society, the division of labor characteristic of industrial society was seen as the basis for a new type of social solidarity — largely spontaneous and self-regulating — the logic of which was mutuality and cooperation (as well as disciplined work), rather than aggression. On the level of the state, the ascendancy of representative and parliamentary institutions completed the work initiated by absolute monarchies. Old feudal conflicts were superseded by active consensus, the delegation of authority, and control over power holders.

In the overall concert of modern concerns, there was a shift away from the commanding heights of power — *les grands coups d'autorité* — and a greater interest in the business of everyday life; from the primacy of political institutions to the primacy of their economic and social counterparts. This shift away from violence was equally apparent in thinking about the state. The state assumed a unitary and public organization having the monopoly not only of force but of the administration of justice as well. This transformation was expected to clear the *conscience collective* of old notions of honor, vengeance, and private justice.

Even in the areas in which the 19th century practiced violence — revolution and war — it saw it as rationalized and instrumental. In both revolution and war, a sharp distinction was made between necessary and useless violence. Violence became organized and controlled: the who, where, when, and how of violence were bounded and rationalized. States and national armies held a monopoly over the means and the exercise of violence. Revolution was conceived as a long process that could culminate in violence, but the latter was only a moment in a larger organizational scheme for changing the social and political organization of a nation. Toward the end of the century, revolutionaries like Marx and Engels had already envisaged alternatives to violence in the ordered transformation of society. The historical sequence seemed then like a trend from revolt to revolution to evolution.

The 20th century, almost since its inception, dealt a rude blow to the faith in peace, or, in its absence, in structured violence. From the perspective of the 19th century, the new state of affairs (the "shock" of WWI) appeared as a regression. Violence, and the consciousness of violence as an intractable feature of the human condition, returned with a vengeance. The reappearance of violence seemed linked to the de-differentiation of the cultural and institutional distinctive spheres developed during the previous one hundred years. In order to understand the experience of violence in the 20th century, it is necessary to trace the heterogeneous sources of this de-differentiation.

Pandora's Box

The 19th century saw both the appearance of the possibility of total war and the need for its containment. On the one hand, the consolidation of the nation state, the erosion of the idea of a superior divine or natural law, and the exaltation of national cultures made war a natural fact — in Clausewitz's famous expression,

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the continuation of politics through other means (whereas today, it is precisely politics which is at risk of becoming the continuation of war by other means). The mercenary army was replaced by the "nation in arms," propelled by powerful ideological and material weapons. The risk that those developments entailed of an unlimited expansion of violence was counterbalanced by an effort to regulate war. The effort was translated into precise juridical norms: a distinction between combatants and non-combatants, the respect for civilians, the wounded, and prisoners; the rights of neutral parties, the banning of some weapons, the limits on retaliation, etc. In short, a new, modern ritual of war emerged: a code of behavior, regulating armed conflict from beginning to end, the paramount feature of which was the establishment of signals of recognition (declarations of war, peace treaties, a clear identification of the enemy, uniforms, insignia). The intent was to reduce, even in war, the arbitrariness of power. War was public, explicit, and regulated. Mortal combat was still compatible with respect for the enemy. But the erosion of respect in combat became a decisive feature in the experience of violence in the 20th century, and the incipient 21st, and what makes subsequent violence different — not necessarily because it is more cruel or brutal, but because it is continuous, total, and undifferentiated.

The slow deconstruction of the ritualistic, differentiated aspects of warfare began in the 19th century, first with the emergence of irregular warfare in the Spanish resistance against Napoleon, and culminated with the development of partisan war and organized revolutionary violence with the Russian Revolution. The concept and practice of war followed the same pattern that Karl Mannheim discovered in the evolution of ideologies: from partial to total, and in fact there is a remarkable "elective affinity" between these two domains. This development has been traced, with singular clarity, in the work of Carl Schmitt.[1]

The parallel development of war and ideology toward increasing totalization resulted in the inability or refusal to distinguish between war and peace as differentiated conditions, between combatants and non-combatants, between production and destruction, between civil society and the state, and between national boundaries themselves (i.e., between internal and external war). On the one hand, internal political conflict mimicked interstate conflict. On the other hand, the relation between states and power blocks took on the form of a global partisan war. A detailed study of these developments would have to focus on the revolutionary party and the revolutionary state as prototypes of the new violence.

The doctrines of revolution, warfare, security, and subversion were important for what they had in common, in terms of documentary and performative value. They all reflected and enacted a process of de-differentiation, and did so regardless

1. Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutger University Press, 1976); *Teoria del Partigiano* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1981). See also *Telos* 72, Special Issue on Carl Schmitt (Summer 1987), and E. V. Walter, *Terror: A Study in Political Violence*, New York, 1969.

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of ideological content. They all used the practice and threat of destruction as the means of redefining social relations and political concepts so thoroughly that they threatened to make older notions of exchange, participation, and politics obsolete. The most important upshot of violence and fear mongering in decaying systems that had fallen into a spiral of terror and counter-terror was the redefinition of the political subject away from the modern, democratic concept of citizenship.[2] That only happened, however, when, for specific political and institutional reasons, asymmetrical warfare became symmetrical. The lesson learned was clear. Security must be maintained without striving for repressive symmetry. In this light, an examination of the strategic options presents a unique opportunity for critical thought.

There was a third factor that both fostered and contained the appearance of generalized violence in the world. It was the factor of global nuclear war between superpowers: a risk so immense that, paradoxically, it prevented war from breaking out in the open, but by the same token left it in suspension and led to underhanded para-military and para-political methods of enacting conflict. The majority of national, ethnic, religious, social, and ideological conflicts during the Cold War — whether genuine and spontaneous or simulated and manufactured — entered that global and paradoxical logic of proxy. All conflicts — especially those that attained a level of violent intensity — had more than one agenda, and in the last analysis, the ruling agenda was the (often hidden) global rivalry of big powers. After the Cold War, the agenda of the remaining superpower was left without the familiar counterpoints, and a Pandora's box of fresh violence was reopened. During the Cold War, the inhibition of major open warfare increased the likelihood of multiple and prolonged "dirty" wars, the opportunity for which lay in regional or national structures. After the Cold War, globalization has taken this logic one step further, and out of the precarious proxy boxes. In a world without outside, all war becomes internal, i.e., hot peace. The disciplining or elimination of states that "harbor terrorism" is no substitute for the old mechanisms of containment. This situation obviously contributes to the bloated consciousness of violence today, "true" because supported by events and communications that have broken the barriers of Cold-War unthinkables, but "false" in that it often gives the impression of a social and political world that is "irrational" and "out of control." Such conclusion seems premature. As the world makes a transition to new, still amorphous forms of collective security, it is prudent to anticipate that states of emergency will proliferate without having a surprising or novel impact on the basic trends of geopolitical reality, or on the operation of well-structured social systems. At most, it will accelerate these trends, and provoke many opportunistic moves. The implications of the crisis are elsewhere, at the level of culture, politics, and citizenship. Today, nations are not at war. Superpowers do not

2. Juan E. Corradi *et al.*, *Fear at the Edge* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1992). See also, "The Mode of Destruction,"in *Telos* 54 (Winter 1982-83), and "A Time for Evil Doers," in *The Fitful Republic* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985).

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confront each other. A revolution did not take place. Instead, a network from within has attacked a single global system, from a base in the extreme without. With this occurrence, the world sometimes seems a real-life production scripted by Eugene Zamyatin, Ian Fleming, or the producers of *Star Trek.*

Advanced social structures are likely to remain stable, but life within them will become more dangerous and more hysterical. The culture of fear — until now confined to decaying systems abroad and episodic occurrences at home — will acquire some saliency in advanced societies, which were hitherto free from its grip. There are strategic choices, however, with quite distinct societal implications. Some paths lead directly to a full-blown culture of fear and devolution of citizenship; others contain the culture of fear, redefine citizenship in positive democratic ways, and find in the current asymmetry their strength.

The first strategic path seeks to achieve repressive symmetry with the terrorist opponent (in Schmitt's term, more "foe" than "enemy"). The arsenal is the combination of military action, improved and internationalized intelligence, severe sanctions against those states that harbor international terrorists, and the ostracism of those states that inspire or support them in less direct ways (i.e., a range of options that go from neutralizing to utterly destroying regimes like the Taliban). An unfortunate consequence of a retaliatory strategy is that it inevitably includes restrictions on civil liberties, clandestine assassinations, and the preventive destruction of suspects. This set of measures cannot but undermine or ignore norms of international law, tolerate the abuse of human rights, and privatize the struggle against terrorist groups. In Samuel Huntington's oft-cited words, it is not so much a "clash of civilizations" as a regression of the hitherto advancing, yet precarious, "third wave" of democracy in former authoritarian states. It also has a negative impact on the tolerance of democratic freedoms in the advanced West.

The second path aims at overcoming the asymmetrical advantage of terrorists in the longer run, and in the opposite sense, while making use of non-repressive means. It combines forceful dissuasion (always a state-based function), with a heavier emphasis on prevention, intelligence and sophistication, which go beyond state initiatives to improve the appalling life conditions of excluded countries and groups. It also involves more heavily the initiatives of, and increased global communication between, non-state actors: local communities around the globe, NGOs, political parties, the churches, and youth groups. They are well situated to address the many and disparate bills of indictment against globalization and its centerpiece: the US. The goal, in this perspective, is to de-legitimate recourse to spectacular violence as a means to redress grievances. It is a long shot, but one that should be actively pursued and thought through, if only to balance the first, state-based response, which is more immediate and focused, but by no means more manageable or sustainable in the end, and carries a very heavy cultural and institutional price. It is desirable that a populism of peace grows alongside, and buttresses, rather than simply opposes, what promises to be a nasty, long, and inconclusive conflict.

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On the September 11 Events, and the US Military Response[1]

Claude Karnoouh

To approach recent events with some detachment, it is best not to provide answers but raise questions. The first contradiction one encounters is the discrepancy between the formidable military — or, rather techno-military — coalition, and the man, his lieutenants and a few thousand soldiers that the US has designated as its adversaries. They are sheltered in a country resembling the moon, without a viable electronic or technological infrastructure, with severely limited financial resources, and supported only by the goodwill of neighboring Pakistan. Such a redoubtable armada could not have the simple goal of arresting or exterminating Bin Laden (even though it is not obvious that Bin Laden is really responsible, since ordinary people have no access to the "proof" of his personal guilt).

Then there must be another goal behind this impressive display of military power. There seems to be something fundamentally rotten in US politics, considering that its political and economic elite is determined to retain control of the global power it has acquired after a century and a half of intervention around the world, armed with a moralistic ideology claiming that everything good for the American elite is good for the world. This is how American imperialism differs from the old European colonialism and comes closer to the Roman concept of imperial power.

To say that, in addition to those who carried out the deed, the infamous Bin Laden is responsible for these attacks seems deceptive — especially since the police and the security agencies have managed to find the evidence with such amazing celerity, while, unlike earlier incidents such as those involving American embassies in East Africa, Bin Laden has not claimed any responsibility.

That Bin Laden has praised the attacks is one thing, that he is the one who planned it is something else. Even though they are clandestine, terrorist networks are not the communist party: they are specifically compartmentalized, non-centralized networks, where there is much autonomy in decision-making — so much that one deeply entrenched in the US could very well have undertaken the project. Moreover, if the technical means employed were not very expensive, and the preparation, as well as the synchronization, betray only a high level of synthesis and abstraction, this does not amount to an inextricable complexity. What was it ultimately about? It boils down to some thoroughly determined terrorists

1. Translated from the French by William Shahin

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skyjacking four planes scheduled to leave around the same time from the same or surrounding airports, and transforming them into flying bombs. Besides learning something about how to fly a plane, which takes time, the rest requires only some acquaintance with plane schedules and choosing the appropriate flights. Consequently, considering that the American secret services do not check all those who consult plane schedules, one can surmise that these services should have kept an eye on people from Muslim countries, or American citizens with a Muslim background, who have learned how to fly — especially after the first attack against the World Trade Center and the American Embassies. Despite a flood of information and arrests of Muslim fundamentalists in Germany, Great Britain, and France, this state of affairs remains extremely unclear, and the Western media claims are not very convincing. Yet, as in all war where terrorism plays a central role, the only question to ask, no matter who the leader may be and whatever the connections of the perpetrators, is not a simple one: Who benefits from the crime? (This is the only question my 88-year mother asked). There are various possible answers that deserve some consideration.

Initially, the crime seems to benefit fundamentalist Muslim terrorists. It may have had to do with encroaching Western populations, dysfunctions caused by air travel, and a generalized fear. It may have sought to slow down or stop a dynamic world caught in a constant flux of commodities, people, money, transportation, and tourism as well as all the economic transactions involved. In short, these attacks may have been meant to destabilize the US and the Western world, which are organically interdependent.

Admittedly, despite the cost of the destruction (without counting the human loss, which cannot be quantified), of buildings and collateral infrastructures, the economic losses incurred during the four days when Wall Street remained closed and the week during which all American planes were grounded, at the end of the month the American stock market had regained part of what it had lost since September 11. The stocks of military and construction industries had also risen significantly. Meanwhile, the attacks have brought to the public's attention the serious economic state of some sectors in aviation, but also in high tech — even in some more traditional sectors. Nor should it be forgotten that, before September 11, the US had entered into a recession. The attacks only accelerated the downward trend, so much so that the state, decried by the advocates of deregulation, was begged to intervene to save these strategic sectors, thus illustrating with a sort of experimental purity what all economists, including the most liberal, have long known, i.e., that a liberal capitalist economy privatizes benefits and socializes losses. It is reasonable to assume that, as the latest figures show, Western economies can comfortably digest the costs of these attacks. This still does not explain why such a mobilization against Afghanistan is necessary.

This response also implies the acceptance of the American authorities' interpretation of the role of fundamentalists in general, and Bin Laden in particular, that

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the CIA and other agencies had helped to organize, arm, and protect. Then, after the fall of the former USSR, the American agencies put them on the world scene by using Afghan *mujahideen*, supervised by the American special forces, to fight on the side of the Bosnian Muslims, then the Albanian UCK in Kosovo and in Macedonia. In a nutshell, American authorities are actually saying these groups they helped organize, protect, and fund have turned against them, i.e., that the US has been betrayed. It is a well-known scenario: the reversal of American allies, who initially thought that the US meant to help them, then realized that the US only seeks to defend its own interests. When they began to move away, they were summarily dismissed by the American agencies. These reversals are quite common: Diem in Vietnam, Noriega in Panama, etc. For that reason, American agencies should have stayed informed about Afghan fundamentalists and others — especially since the power play in that zone had already begun, and the oil reserves in the Caspian Sea and surrounding former Russian republics called for the removal of all Russian influence. Now, since Putin took power, it seems that Russia is slowly and painfully coming back. Could not the mobilization of such an armada against the Taliban and Afghanistan, the deployment of American troops in Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan, be connected with setting up the fortified areas necessary to control future dynamics? If such is the case, dealing with terrorism by bombing Afghanistan is only a pretext. Despite the knowing smiles of Blair, Chirac, Shröder, Berlusconi, etc., no one has seen any of the evidence Bush has mentioned, not even the members of the coalition. For that reason, the various governments use all the legal means to prevent genuine debate within their Parliament, in claiming that the bombing is not war, but simply a police action.

Who benefits from the crime? Out of respect for the American victims, one should not point to the military-industrial complex. Yet, given that in the first days of the bombing the US Navy launched 50 Tomahawk missiles, costing altogether around 50 million dollars, one cannot help wondering about the economic implications. But that only amounts to "small" short-term benefits. In legitimating the American response as a police action, the WTC crime paves the way for the introduction of soldiers into these regions, which, according to experts, contain more oil and gas than the reserves in the North Sea. It should not be forgotten that the implosion of the USSR has left a void that US strategy has since tried to fill, beginning with its support for the Chechens, Georgia, and the fundamentalists fighting against Tajikistan's pro-Russian regime. The raid on Afghanistan to capture a man, his lieutenants and a few others is beginning to look like a vast mystification of public opinion — not just Western, but on a global scale. An act of revenge that has all the appearances of a morally justifiable act seems to have a hidden agenda. One could even think of it as veritable power play, carried out with the complicity of the Western media. As evidence, consider how the American authorities, as well as their European counterparts, have prohibited the free dissemination of information concerning Afghanistan, from the only functioning international television

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network there. What are Western authorities afraid of, that they have to impose what amounts to censorship? Undoubtedly, it is the picture of the collateral damage, but maybe also another picture of what is at stake in the conflict.

Again: who benefits from the crime? There has been other responses. Since Seattle, US economic decisions and those of G7 governments have been vigorously challenged. Nice, Stockholm, where live ammunition were fired at protesters, and finally Genoa and the many wounded constitute obstacles for the world masters. The world techno-economy has begun to be criticized by social groups other than the usual leftists and marginal ecologists. The protest won over part of the middle classes and, more importantly, the postmodern "upper middle class," the New Class. This movement is not limited to the US, but extends over all developed nations. Another point that should be raised has to do with a rampant recession, threatening a tumbling of high-tech stocks. Experts even foresee a severe recession next year, with a simultaneous rise in the stock market thanks to a drastic increase in unemployment. But how can the grievances of the population that can easily turn into protest and, worse yet, revolt, be mastered? The recipe is as old as state power: orchestrate fear to better control the situation and impose restrictions on freedom. From this viewpoint, the attacks of the WTC and the Pentagon were perfect. It has meant increased control of communication, an explicitly announced censorship, a ubiquitous military presence, a patriotic and military climate, a Manichean spirit of crusade (here Bush is like Blair or Chirac), the rejection of all critical analyses and a refusal to inquire into the origins of terrorism, of the enormous economic dysfunction in the Third World, of the scandalous apartheid in the occupied Palestinian territories, the diabolical games the US and some of its allies play in the Balkans and in the Caucus, etc.

In order to do that, does one have to go into the delicate terrain of the origin of the attacks? Who committed them? Not the men in the planes, but the actual leaders that were not there. Recall that, while Bin Laden has praised these attacks, he never claimed responsibility for them as he had with the attacks on the American embassies in Africa. One is therefore in the fog. Some commentators have speculated about a repeat of Pearl Harbor. The appropriate agencies knew about it, but allowed it to happen in order to accrue all the political, military and economic benefits from it. Is it plausible, if one is to believe the French and Israeli secret services, that they warned their American colleagues that something big was hatching, but they could not prove it (and may never be proven)?

One can imagine those responsible to be a group settled in the US, connected to other groups in Germany (again, there is no evidence that only Arabs were responsible for the attacks in all of the planes) and who knew of Bin Laden only through his writings, widely available in the Islamic world. There is reason to believe that Arabo-Islamic, Islamic-Pakistani, Islamic-Indonesian, etc. radicalism are part of very decentralized networks w which do not necessarily communicate among themselves, even though they pursue similar goals. This may be

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why, initially at least, American civil authorities wavered in explaining the events, for which they were severely criticized. What can be done with such a catastrophe? How can it be exploited? Who should be accused, since no one has claimed responsibility? Admittedly, if the culprits were captured immediately, one could read this hesitation as an indication that the authorities had been caught unprepared. Yet, the hypothesis remains valid, that the authorities knew, and that they waited before intervening in order to spread the burden of uncertainty and the fear it engenders within a distraught people, while showing that they were also surprised. Lastly, a third assumption is possible, i.e., that the freedom allowed the terrorists was the result of a conflict within the US leadership, between hawks and doves — those who knew what was being plotted and let it happen in order to compel the less radical leaders to accept the stronger positions in the power play, regarding both the Third World and the Western opposition.

It is all too easy to forget that while terrorism has long been the military and political tool of the weak and the poor, it has also been and remains a political means for those in power, to be directed even against their own citizens, co-religionists and subjects. Since the burning of the *Reichstag*, since grenades were thrown by Israeli secret service agents at synagogues in Egypt or in Iraq to coerce ancient Jewish communities to emigrate to Israel, since the IRA's and ETA's attacks on their own people in order to generate support for their respective clandestine liberation movements, these have been unfortunately banal actions: briefly put, these attacks are polymorphic means to rearrange the world (except for the victims). Sometimes it allows these covert groups to influence the legal and legitimate authorities' decisions; it also allows authorities, with the aid of the media, to designate as the enemy whomever they wish, according to needs of the moment. This is why it is always difficult for the non-initiated to see things clearly; this is also why these attacks make it possible for both perpetrators and authorities to manipulate the media.

All these interpretations are admissible, depending on what aspects of the events one wishes to emphasize. The only sure thing is the hatred (but also the fascination) generated in the Third World by the US. It has been a long time since there has been such an intense hatred for any country. That is why, no matter who planned these attacks, they have delighted hundreds of thousands — indeed, tens of millions — of Muslims, and, what is even more bothersome, also poor Christians or animists in Africa, Asia, Australia, and Latin America.

One final conclusion can be drawn from these terrifying attacks. Undeniably, most American citizens and those of other Western nations (the real attitudes in Europe, unmediated by a subservient media) have been shocked by the images, constantly replayed and rebroadcast, of the fire and destruction of the twin towers. Beyond the legitimate horror of spectators confronted with desperate people, forced to throw themselves out of windows to escape the fire and the smoke, only to die crushed under the ruins, what distressed many Westerners is precisely the

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destruction of the symbols of American grandeur at the heart of Western power. It is the enormity of such a destruction that abruptly raised questions about Western confidence and arrogance. The response to the horrifying challenge of these attacks is the tremendous military intervention launched by the US and its guard dog, Great Britain. Thus, everything has become enormous, without any limits. How can one deny that the very war of terrorism has entered the gigantism of the postmodern, the hubris that characterizes everything: sports, finance, investments, buildings' size, urban space, technical innovation, genetic engineering promising immortality, the greenhouse effect, pollution, etc.? Who dares deny that this is the eye of the storm generated by the "normal" unleashing of technology? Finally, who can deny that this achievement is but a perfect illustration of that becoming that in his meditations Heidegger had traced to the metaphysical foundations of technology? Or, will those who resist the wisdom of the Black Forest stroller feel more reassured by a Marxist formula, knowing that man makes history, but without knowing it . . . But is not the history they make that of technology? Here is the final question: can this technology conquer those who mock it, even if they use only bits of it to reach their ends? Can massive bombing force the wolf Bin Laden out of his cave? The question remains open.

There is another important aspect of the relation between the West, Bin Laden and the Taliban that has not been mentioned. The architects of Third World national liberation movements come from the comfortable middle classes — the intellectual milieus — who have had nothing to do with most of the population. What characterizes Bin Laden's path is one that the West knew during the Middle Ages: the path of rejection of fortunes, worldly pleasures — in short, the path of asceticism in the name of the faith. In Christian as well as Muslim traditions (but also those of Hinduism and Buddhism), that path is nothing less than that of sainthood. That is why American authorities and their allies can blame Bin Laden for all the terrorist acts, but they cannot convince the poor Muslim masses (the overwhelming majority of the Third World) of the perversity of these so-called terrorists, ready to renounce all riches in the name of an ideal. The same goes for the Taliban. Unlike European Muslims, the leaders in Bosnia, the Albanians in Kosovo or Macedonia — but also the elites surrounding Arafat and the various Palestinian groups, the semi-gangsters in the Philippines, etc. the Taliban have not shown the least interest in the financial gains that can be accrued from their position since they took power in Afghanistan (with the aid of Pakistani and American secret services).

Here, the West is confronted with a type of faith that it once knew, but has since forgotten. That is why President Bush's calls to God to protect America is not of the same sort. Bigotry arises precisely from such appeals: this Christianity does not prevent any of the practices that Christianity fervently condemn today, such as the systematic use of the death penalty. If, as with every religion, there is also Muslim bigotry, what the Taliban and Bin Laden have done translates, for

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the Muslim masses, into behaving according to beliefs, the application of theory to praxis. Even if armed with Kalishakovs and stinger missiles (provided years earlier by the US), the Taliban see the world as completely dependant on divine transcendence, and the action of people in this world as warranted by goals that *a priori* attain divinity through acquaintance with its literature. Here is a theory of history, of a social and political nature, where transcendent principles and goals are ultimately parts of one and the same discourse. That is why no sanctions, no repression, no bombing will put an end to kamikaze terrorism: following their beliefs, the people engaged in these activities submit themselves to the divine will, and are therefore blessed. This is not the first time that the total misunderstanding of the West at the root of this struggle has led to the extermination of the recalcitrants. This is how the conquest of America began.

Liquid Terrorism: The World Turned Upside Down

James Kulk

In 1991, Tim Luke wrote an article entitled "The Discipline of Security Studies and the Codes of Containment: Learning From Kuwait." In the introduction, Luke argued that modern industrial society was being transformed by what he called "informationalism." The old organizational logic was anchored to place with power, drawing boundaries around space and erecting monetary, military, and managerial fences (i.e., the nation-state), while the new logic was "nested in flexible accumulation, rapid and intense flows of ideas, good, symbols, people, images, and money on a global scale." This informational capacity was supposedly the emerging basis of US hegemony.

In 2000 Zygmunt Bauman, in a book entitled *Liquid Modernity*, added some additional dimensions to Luke's thesis about the new power of flows. Bauman maintained, as did Luke, that the old metaphor of power, Bentham's design of the Panopticon, had been replaced. In the Panopticon, the inmates were tied to place and under constant watch. In such circumstances, there was at least the possibility

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of mutual engagement and confrontation between the two sides of the power relation. But now, according to Bauman, power can move with the speed of an electronic signal (Luke's power of flows). It has become exterritorial or what he calls post-Panoptical. He states that what mattered in the Panopticon was that the people in charge were always assumed to be there or nearby in the control tower. What matters, for Bauman, in post-panotical power relations is that the people operating the levers of power can, at any moment they wish, disappear beyond reach into sheer inaccessibility. For Bauman, the prime technique of power is now escape, slippage, avoidance, and the rejection of territorial confinement.

Bauman believes that the world is now witnessing the revenge of nomadism over the principle of territoriality and settlement. In this so-called fluid state of modernity, the settled majority is ruled by a nomadic and extraterritorial elite. The attack on Sept. 11 lends some support to this framework but from a surprising source. The conspiratorial entity Al Qaeda appears to support the liquidity metaphor at least as persuasively as does the advanced capitalist world.

Al Qaeda appears mobile, slippery, shifty, evasive, and quite adept at "flowing" through unfortified borders. Ahmed Rashid, correspondent for the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, points to the extraterritoriality of some of the individuals in this entity when he states that many are no longer linked to any active base back home. "They are your free-for-all mercenaries, who are available to do anything to keep their leverage with Bin Laden." He calls them "Hip Hop" terrorists who want to imitate Bin Laden, earn his respect or that of the Egyptian leader or Mullah Omar or some Pakistani Islamic leader. He goes on to say that "really, they are not carrying any ideological history with them, they are not rooted in any kind of Islamic movement, or Islamic history of radicalism. Basically they are coming from nowhere and so they are available to do whatever is necessary."

The inaccessibility of Al Qaeda members also appears pronounced. Rashid makes the point that "the CIA or FBI are going to have great difficulty categorizing these guys. They are not going to be able to pin them down and make a profile that shows their pedigree." Furthermore, former intelligence operatives from the CIA and the British SAS make it sound as if their respective organizations are the ones largely stuck in "place." Reuel Marc Gerecht, a former CIA operative, recently wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly* that "the CIA probably does not have a single truly qualified Arabic-speaking office of Middle Eastern background who can play a believable Muslim fundamentalist who would volunteer to spend years of his life with shitty food and no women in the mountains of Afghanistan. For Christ's sake, most case officers live in the suburbs of Virginia. We do not do that kind of thing. Operations that include diarrhea as a way of life don't happen."

Tom Carew, an SAS soldier who helped turn Afghanistan's fighters into a modern guerrilla force in the 1980s, talked about the swiftness of the *mujahedin*. "When I arrived in Peshawar, an Afghan military leader warned me: 'I hope your are fit, my men march very quickly.' No problem I thought, I was used to

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marching. But my God: up, up we went. We entered the Hindu Kush mountains and started climbing. Above 10,000 feet the oxygen started to thin and my concentration to lapse. The Afghans were used to it." Carew goes on to say "that the Afghans have it all organized, moving from one village to the next, where they have stocks of food. This is how they have fought and won wars for 200 years, with little bases all over the place and holes in the ground where everything is buried. This allows them to carry as little as possible and to cover ground much faster than a western force could. We did not use tents, we lived in caves or slept rough. Most of the army carried just a weapon, three magazines of ammunition and some bread, all wrapped in a shawl on their back. No western soldier could carry heavy equipment and keep up with them. By mid-October the snow will be up to neck height. A journey that takes three days in summer will take 10 days in winter -– and of course in the snow you leave tracks."

Money flows in central Asia also appear sophisticated, but not in the electronic signal sense. It is an underground banking system, which is enormous and widespread. According to Alkman Granitsas of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, a client approaches a local underground bank in, say, some Islamabad travel agency. He deposits $10,000 to be remitted to an associate in Bangkok. The travel agency in Islamabad give the sender a receipt or chit, something as simple as a specially marked movie-ticket stub. The chit is mailed to the Bangkok recipient, who then presents it to an associated travel agency and withdraws the $10,000 in Thai baht. With no banks involved there is no record of the cross-border transaction.

These liquid terrorists appear swift of foot, elusive, and capable of managing their own money flows largely undetected by the electronic signals of the institutionalized banking system. However, it may be on a psychological level that they are most vulnerable. They seem certain of the justness of their revenge on the West, and that very certainty may be their undoing.

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September 11

Russell A. Berman

Because of the numbing shock of September 11, and because subsequent events continue to unfold in disquieting and unexpected ways, it is impossible to draw definitive conclusions, either for politics or for the Critical Theory. After all, *Telos* is not a journal of current events, and none of the contributors can lay claim to any special access to intelligence sources (not that there is much evidence that intelligence, in any of its meanings, has been especially well used by the political class or by the mainstream media). There is consequently a strong temptation to refrain from writing, although this reluctance may just be a particular case of the predisposition of intellectuals to prefer hesitation to action. But the hour is now. The events are underway — the campaign in Afghanistan, the anthrax cases, the domestic anti-terrorism initiatives, the fighting in Kashmir — as is a political debate. Acknowledging the provisional and tentative character of these reflections, one can recall the historical relation of Critical Theory to the essay as form: in a context of only fragmentary knowledge, the essayist makes an effort to think through the layers of recalcitrant material. It is a doubly difficult task: to refuse any easy totalization or monolithic account of events, while nonetheless responding to the occasion, the moment of political decision. It would be easier to avoid the painful topic, to be sure, but the political challenge is here now.

The resistance to writing is however due not only to the fact that we are still *in medias res*. The brutality of the killings that took place in New York and Washington was literally incredible, and the appearance of unreality was magnified by the style of the mass media portrayal: the repetitive rebroadcast of the same footage and the frequently pointless commentary. The real, horrific, tragic, and painful events underwent a bizarre transformation, as they were turned into a media event. The point is not — as with Baudrillard on the Gulf War — that this was somehow merely a representation (some postmodern critics are of course eager to make this sort of ridiculous argument) — but that the experience of the event for those not immediately present takes place via the mechanisms of the mass media. The incredibility of the real events acquires additional strangeness through the media treatment. This unreality has been further amplified by the fact that the perpetrators made no specific demands. The authors of the attacks refused to explain their actions. Because of this lack of clear demands, the *quid pro quo* presumably expected in situations of extortion, the attacks took on even more fantastic proportions, and immediately became available for interpreters as

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blank screens on to which to project their own agenda.

Of course, there has been no lack of such respondents and critics, eager to leap into that void and provide imaginative explanations. Evidently, in some circles, fantastic conspiracy theories are circulating, suggesting that it was not Bin Laden at all, but a provocation or a pretext generated by the US. The fact that US intelligence services had been alerted — by the French, by the Israelis, by the Philipinos — that an attack was planned, but nonetheless did nothing to prevent it is treated as proof that the US intelligence services, and by extension, the US leadership in general, were somehow complicit, banking on the political benefits that would accrue. What is interesting about this absurd response is its deep and paranoid faith in the effectiveness if US bureaucracy: rather than treating the fumbled intelligence as an indication of the incompetence of the US security network, the conspiracy-thinkers imagine that every action is taken on orders from above and carried out with total efficiency. The naive admiration for the rationality of bureaucracy is truly endearing. Conspiracy theory is the first haven for reified thought.

To leap to a conspiracy theory of this sort betrays an ultimate unwillingness to come to grips with the fact of the attacks, the murders of some five thousand people by cruel fanatics. In the meantime, a more standard left-wing and "anti-imperialist" position has emerged, which does not deny the attacks, and which may even feign some condemnation, but which fundamentally offers a justification for the terrorism. While, as of this writing, no one has definitively claimed responsibility, the Left in effect adopts the US government position that it was the Bin Laden network which carried out the attacks; but it then proceeds to explicate the otherwise missing rationale of the attacks by blaming the US government — rather then the terrorists — for policies which allegedly led to the attacks. The basis of the claim is the suggestion that if the US government had not pursued such and such policies, the attacks would not have taken place; therefore, the attacks are treated as results of, even legitimate responses to US policies. Thus, very much like the conspiracy thinkers, the anti-imperialists ultimately blame the US government. In order to come to grips with the horror of the events, some evidently succumb to a familiar psychoanalytic mechanism. Because the violence cannot be allowed to be senseless, it has to be interpreted as legitimate punishment; because the US was hurt, the US must be guilty. The anti-imperialists prefer to blame the victim. Hence, the efforts, in the absence of a statement by the perpetrators, to impute meanings by projecting "rationale" for the attacks. Nor surprisingly, none of the proposed rationale stands up to scrutiny.

The anti-imperialists typically cite three aspects of US policy as *de facto* justifications of the attacks: US support for Israel, the bombings of Iraq, and US presence in Saudi Arabia. In other words, the specious suggestion is made that revisions in these policies would have prevented the attacks or might (such is the logic of extortion) guarantee future safety. It is of course useful to remember that is it barely a year since the US sponsored negotiations that would have led to a

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Palestinian state and a divided rule of Jerusalem. Arafat's inability to seize that opportunity reflects either a profound political ineptitude or an aspiration for a greater goal: not a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, but in all of "Palestine," i.e., including pre-1967 Israel. If that is the case, then the issue, which allegedly provoked the bombing, is not US support for an Israel that builds settlements in the West Bank, but US support for an Israel that includes Tel Aviv. For the anti-imperialists eagerly hitching a ride on the September 11 attacks, it would therefore not be sufficient for the US to prevail on Israel to limit settlements, since that was the point of the round of negotiations with Barak. Instead, the US would have to advocate the abolition of Israel altogether. The UN-mandated separation of Jewish and Moslem areas in Palestine in 1948 (like the simultaneous separation of Hindu and Moslem populations in the Indian subcontinent) may not meet standard expectations of universalism. However, if the September 11 attacks are to be attributed, at least in part, to US support for Israel, it is important to delineate what issues and borders are really at stake.

The bombings in Iraq and the wider policy of sanctions are a direct result of the Gulf War, due to the Iraqi attack on Kuwait. Moreover, enforcement of no-fly zones reflects efforts to limit the power of the Baghdad regime, with its own historic propensity for genocidal persecution of its minority populations. There is to be sure a lesson to be learned here involving the ambiguity of US foreign policy: how can it limit the scope of a regime without undertaking to replace it. In the background is the debate over the goals of the Gulf War, the unfortunate decision to leave Hussein in power, and the typically conservative reluctance to engage in "nation-building." Had a democratic regime emerged in Baghdad in the wake of the war, today's situation would be very different indeed (and a secondary support for Bin Laden would have been eliminated). The current debate over the nature of a post-Taliban Afghanistan raises the political question that was avoided ten years ago in Iraq.

Finally, the allegation is made (in the meantime confirmed by Bin Laden's statements) that the US, and more generally Western (or specifically: non-Muslim) presence in Saudi Arabia is itself a *causus belli*. Non-Muslims, so the argument goes, desecrate the sanctity of the sacred land. That the Left, otherwise proud of its secularizing identity, chooses to lend credence to this claim is embarrassing (imagine Catholics arguing that Muslims should not be allowed to set foot in the holy city of Rome). The dour state of the Left is such that it has thought none of these issues through: does it genuinely support the full abolition of Israel (rather than merely the dismantling of the settlements), free rein for Saddam Hussein's war on the Kurds and other minorities, and a principle of religious discrimination in international movements? That none of these issues is bridged on a level deeper than propaganda demonstrates the feeble character of contemporary anti-imperialism: all local issues, with their attendant complexities, are eclipsed by a monomaniacal fascination with the superpower. Whoever is against the

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superpower is, by definition, good, no matter what other crimes are underway. (The history of feminist silence on the Taliban can stand as one shameful example for many). Contemporary anti-imperialism is the preferred shape of one-dimensional thought; the structural proximity to conspiracy thinking betrays its poverty.

One further issue lurks in the background. In the wake of statements by Bin Laden, the question of Kashmir has been raised, i.e., what is at stake is not only "Islamic" claims against the Jews in Israel, but also against the Hindus in India. Who would have thought that Islamic fundamentalists highjacked planes to crash into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in order to protest the Hindu presence in Kashmir! Clearly what is underway is the retroactive construction of an opportunistic list of rationale for the attacks. Every possible grievance is being mobilized to justify the unjustifiable.

While the Left is eager to seize on September 11 as a morality tale about its own agenda, the Right has processed the attacks into a rationale for military solutions and an expanded security apparatus. Whether or not bombing Afghanistan makes sense as a policy remains to be seen. The strongest argument for it is that it might lead to the collapse of the Taliban regime and the hope for a modicum of dignity for the half of the Afghans who are women. Yet, this calculation comes dangerously close to the interventionist nation-building that the Bush regimes (senior and junior) have been wont to avoid. A convincing case has yet to be made that the Afghan campaign stands a reasonable chance of crushing the Bin Laden network; the result will be known soon. Similar doubts are raised by the emerging domestic anti-terror initiatives. It is indeed easy to wonder in retrospect why the US does not have a tighter security system, national identity cards, more surveillance, etc. Yet, the Bin Laden network was able to thrive quite well in the traditionally much more security conscious environments of Belgium, France, and Germany. Strengthening police networks (sharing information, loosening extradition barriers, allowing for greater surveillance of banking information, etc.) may make the work of future terrorists more difficult. It will surely not make it impossible — a standard that clearly no police measure can promise to meet. The challenge here is to try to balance the desideratum of security through police measures against the risks to individual liberty.

It is worth recalling that the major focus of the right in security matters before September 11 was the missile shield, which would have proven absolutely useless in this instance. The fascination with big weapons systems, and technological solutions, overshadows the absence of genuine intelligence, and the human engagement with other political and cultural systems. The failure of US intelligence to foresee this sort of attack recalls a similar blindness with regard to the Iranian revolution. The fact that next to no one in the military speaks Arabic is, not only in the long run, more important than the targeting capacity of cruise missiles, especially in a country with not enough targets to hit.

Surely, the US was unprepared and vulnerable. The inability of the security

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forces to heed the warnings coming from abroad betrays bureaucratic bumbling, but that incompetence is only an expression of a larger disregard for foreign politics and cultural complexities. If the US had an education system that invested in developing expertise in other regions — and did so without filtering its pedagogy through political correctness — there might have been a greater awareness in the intelligence apparatus. However, the systematic dismantling of education in the foreign languages, an effect of a wider malaise in the universities, has taken its toll. A major effort will be necessary to reverse it, and there is little reason for optimism. This failing of the academic world, however, interlocks with the cultural predisposition to disregard the world and the threats it entails. The September 11 attacks were not unprecedented: the WTC had been targeted previously, the *Cole* was nearly sunk, the African embassies were bombed. A systematic campaign by a terrorist organization has been waged against the US, but the public — not only the government — chose to disregard the sustained character of the aggression. The long-standing refusal to recognize the threat is evidently the prehistory to the current sense of unreality associated with September 11. This is a culture that prefers to be unaware of the world, its complexities and its threats, or to believe that every danger has a solely technological solution. Yet, neither greater police powers nor more accurate missiles will help much, without the sorts of cultural changes that might lead to a willingness to comprehend other parts of the world.

If there is a counterexample, some evidence of an ability to come to grips with danger, it involves the enigmatic fate of the fourth plane The initial press reports of passenger resistance to the highjackers seem to have disappeared: perhaps because any first-hand knowledge is buried in the wreckage of the crash, but perhaps also because the event runs counter to the culture's preferred self-understanding as victims and clients of a protective state. While the Right appeals to a security state, the Left envisions greater interventionism around the world, albeit with a new "progressive" foreign policy. In contrast, the passengers' revolt on the fourth plane points to the autonomous action of free and brave citizens. One can envision the passengers somehow "voting," as reported in one telephone to a family member, and by storming the highjackers preventing another crash in a major metropolitan area, perhaps even on the White House. What personal courage, what cultural resources were involved that allowed for that heroism? Can one imagine cultivating that virtue, and how would it fare in the American cultural and political landscape today? This strength of character was not the patriotism of symbolic ostentation or the blind faith in technology, and certainly not the obligatory *mea culpa* of the Left. Whatever it was went down with the plane, but it must have surely involved something like a sense of duty and solidarity in the face of death: the same sort of solidarity that took shape in the rescue efforts: a political community with a will to survive. Any political community is more than its military technological resources; indeed, an obsession with technical solutions contributes to the subversion of the community it claims to defend. This is not to say

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that security measures are pointless. Defense is clearly necessary in a menacing world; but a transformation of politics into technological solutions or its replacement by the military will not strengthen the polity.

One can of course imagine an extensive expansion of the military and the domestic security apparatus, but it is impossible to envision how such moves could preclude future attacks. The recent bombings in Moscow and the Bin Laden networks in Europe demonstrate how increased police resources do not make for terror-proof societies. One may have to face up to the grim ineradicability of danger in the world. The Left rejoinder would be that every danger is merely a result of US policies; if only the US would change is imperialist ways, then the world would be at peace and danger would vanish overnight. What is wrong with this assessment is that it misses one of the most familiar aspects of the attacks: the act of terror designed to exacerbate tensions, not to solve problems. Bin Laden is not the wretched of the earth (i.e., the presumed beneficiary of an anti-imperialist turn in US politics), but rather the scion to a five billion dollar Saudi construction fortune, disavowed however by his family, including Harvard trained lawyers, as the "black sheep." (New Left lore had it that the members of the Weather underground were disproportionately from wealthy backgrounds; Bin Laden would seem to fit that pattern, the self-proclaimed leader, dismissive of established political movements and structures, meddling in affairs where he has no standing, and very used to money). His collaborators come from educated strata, not from the streets of refugee camps. Neither military force nor the political revisionism of the Left can guarantee that others will not follow in Bin Laden's footsteps: other wealthy misfits with yet to be determined axes to grind.

To the extent that terrorism draws on the resource base of Islamic fundamentalism, the complexities of globalization are at stake. The spread of global capitalism elicits resentment and resistance from carriers of traditional values, but the only credible alternative to poverty is integration into the capitalist world market. Western anti-globalizers (as present in the Seattle and Genoa demonstrations) trade on that resentment without offering any alternative to Third World poverty. If it is the case that Bin Laden's public supporters (if not himself), as well as the demonstrators in Pakistan and Indonesia emerge due to economic hopelessness, the strategy to reduce that support base surely involves more, not less integration into the world economy and, therefore, more, not less US presence. If, in some surreal scenario, the West were truly to pull out of the Arab world (perhaps by an ecologically sound decision to shift to nuclear energy and eschew fossil fuels), the result would certainly include a massive reduction of resources available for the Middle East economies — hardly a positive program for combating poverty. The best vehicle to combat Third World poverty is globalized capitalism.

There is no guarantee that the Afghan campaign will succeed, and to date the Bush administration has evidently not succeeded in defining its goals. Yet, despite expectations (especially among those intellectuals congenitally suspicious

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of US foreign policy), the same administration proceeded cautiously enough, building an international coalition against terror. That agenda, including the cultivation of support from moderate Arab and other Islamic countries, displaced the question of a clash of civilizations. At this point, in any case, it is Bin Laden who is trying to define the conflict as one between Islam and the West; the West, in contrast, has been anxious to integrate the Islamic world into the coalition. In the domestic arena, anti-Arab sentiment and harassment did develop after September 11. Yet after this "Pearl Harbor," nothing of the scale of what took place with Japanese-Americans after 1941 has occurred; indeed, nothing like the anti-Iranian riots after the embassy takeover in 1979. The message from the political leadership — even prior to the efforts to integrate moderate Arab states into the anti-terror coalition — has consistently entailed an emphatic condemnation of anti-Arab or anti-Islamic acts or sentiments. With an eye to the international agenda, Bush has gone even further, praising Islam as a religion of peace.

Two questions follow with regard to the cultural issues at stake. The US and, with some qualifications, the rest of the West is the model of a society in which ethnic and religious identities are privatized and in which tolerance is the first-line response to other religions. Is that tolerance the result of a procedural rationality and therefore, implicitly, universal in its application, or is it the specific character of a West that emerged from the legacies of Greco-Roman antiquity and Judeo-Christian spirituality (as Berlusconi effectively implied)? In the latter case, the face of Western largesse is in fact the strategy of Western culture. Bush's comparative claim that Islam, like all great religions, advocates peace draws on an Enlightenment trope, the deist vision of a shared genuine religion beneath specific confessions. (Lessing's *Nathan the Wise* comes to mind). Defining Islam in this way, Bush may be acting more like a "Crusader" than he imagines.

Thus, the international coalition against terror implies first of all a question as to the character of Western universalism (it is ironic that even this conservative foreign-policy administration cannot avoid the American legacy of Wilsonianism). But it also poses a second question to Islam: is Bush's characterization correct? Is it, as a religion of peace, basically indistinguishable from Judaism and Christianity? Part of the answer surely has to do with a historical sociology of religion: Christianity and Islam (in contrast to non-proselytizing Judaism) spread in very different ways, and the models of martyrdom are quite different: Christian martyrdom at the hands of the Roman state versus Islamic martyrdom in wars of conquest. It is true that Christianity at times spread by military force, as in Latin America; but John Paul has defined that violence as having been a failing, and has offered apologies for it. Does Islam recognize its history of conquest and forced conversion as a similar failing? Is there really no legacy of a warrior religion in historical Islam? The other part of the answer has to do with contemporary Islam. There is obviously an enormous diversity within the Islamic world (although that does not imply any significant tolerance for non-Moslems: witness

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the fate of the Buddha statues, Joseph's tomb, and the persecution of Christians in Africa). It is difficult to determine whether Bin Laden represents one (among many) appropriate and possible interpretations of Islam, or whether he should be understood more as a pathological sectarian, an Islamic Jim Jones. Many Arab and Islamic political leaders have condemned Bin Laden and the September 11 attacks, just as a vocal minority of demonstrators has celebrated them, while lionizing Bin Laden. One can however only wonder about the vast silent majority of Moslems in between. Do they regard Bin Laden as a hero or a killer? Islamic demonstrations against Bin Laden have been few and far between, and only in the US. Evidently, the contemporary Islamic world has not been successful in generating democratic political forms or open public debate. Until it does so, it runs the risk of being confused with an extremist fringe. It is here that the original question recurs: is liberal democracy a product of a specific Western culture and limited to that context, or is it potentially a universal form? In the latter case, one might ask about the potential for democracy in the Islamic world.

In the meantime, September 11 brought into focus a long-standing campaign of violence against the US, carried out in the name of Islam, by a Saudi billionaire and his supporters. The US administration has used skill in building a broad coalition of support. Whether the measures taken will be successful is an empirical, not a theoretical question. The crux of the matter however involves the primary mission of the state to guarantee security, without infringing on the liberties that define society. In the age of globalization and clashing civilizations, there is also the question as to whether a society defined by liberty is only a narrowly Western concept or has a universal validity. Is Islam a religion of liberty too? If so, then sooner or later the Islamic public will have to give up its knee-jerk anti-Americanism and recognize that its own political forms need reexamination.

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Wait and See?

Gabor T. Rittersporn

It is perhaps hasty to try to draw far-reaching conclusions from the September 11 affair. The dust has not settled yet. Probably it is not going to settle for a while, at least as far as media noise is concerned. To be sure, the public risks to get tired of it. But politicians and commentators will do their best to keep alive a minimal interest, and people having enough spare time to pay attention will follow their moves and chatter. Still, many others will have to earn their living, keep anxious about their precarious employment, look for jobs and care for their children. Few wonders last more than a couple of days. Even extremely unpleasant circumstances are likely to become part and parcel of daily existence.

A couple of bombs may explode here and there, peaceful citizens may be gunned down, architectural treasures and old works of art may be irreparably damaged. And all this despite heroic efforts by powerful states to wreak heavy strikes on supposed shelters of terrorists. It is doubtful that there is a simple way to prevent this kind of war. It is equally doubtful it is a new variety of war or if it warrants another name. Wars are fought with rather precise aims and most often in order to occupy or to hold territories. Hardly any territory is at stake in this conflict and in those likely to take place in the future. It is even possible that the stakes are barely possible to spell out, because they happen to be symbolic — so much so that the terrorists who spearheaded the attack do not even try to come up with anything that would resemble an explanation for their act. One cannot avoid suspecting that they are not really able to rationalize what they are doing.

For all that, they have been planning and preparing their move for months and years. They have taken considerable risks. And they know, all along, that their days are numbered. Is this simple fanaticism? Can it be explained just in terms of this or that religion, whose practitioners usually do not carry out such deeds? Is this not a despair that frustrated people increasingly succumb to, no matter where they come from and under what banner they struggle? Is there a deluge of frustrated people who have convinced themselves that their days are numbered anyway and that their cause (if they have one) has absolutely no prospect to succeed? They may fight for a Promised Land they do not necessarily know what to do with, like Palestinians; they may feel they are condemned to hopeless poverty, as about a third of Russia's population does at this moment; they may be persuaded that their irremediably lost living conditions warrant their shooting in every possible direction, like a number of people do everywhere in the world.

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There is almost no place where they cannot strike. This is why the bewildering variety of motives which may prompt their acts and the equally bewildering variety of people who may be ready to strike can trigger the tightening of controls over everything and everybody who can be controlled. A fellow who opts for couscous instead of hamburger or even the one who only hesitates between Coca Cola and a drop of Beaujolais may attract attention as soon as a crisis situation is thought to be in sight. And if he had the bad luck of paying a kebab sandwich for a brownish chap, then he had better hide. But where? The odds are that he may be taken to task everywhere in a world where permissiveness and personal liberties do not seem to have a place in the face of an omnipresent danger whose name and physiognomy are impossible to ascertain.

All this sounds like a bad joke. But in a conflict whose nature is unpredictable and whose participants can be everywhere, the only reasonable conduct is to suspect potential criminals everywhere and to detect clues of their contemplated deeds behind everything people do, fail to do, are likely to do or say, do not say, etc. Moreover, a war of shadows justifies setting up entire underground armies which must act in obscurity, have to keep an eye not only on the population whose taxes feed them, but also on each other, and who are all the more authorized to prevent anything they designate as potential crime, and by every means — if need be, murder on simple suspicion — because no one can distinguish friends from enemies. It is not difficult for politicians to hypnotize themselves in the firm belief that civilizations are clashing and crusades are taking place, i.e., holy wars in which absolutely everything is permitted to stamp out a foe and anyone close. Clandestine armies will have to manipulate opposing ones as well as each other, so that hardly anyone who gets a bullet in his back will know if this happened through a terrorist act, by accident or in the name of the lofty goal of security.

A legion of organic intellectuals is going to sing the praise of abolishing personal freedom and of heightened security measures. Many of them are going to be experts of undefinable issues in rapidly growing administrations whose task will be as hard to define as the dangers they fight. A typical feeling of this officialdom will be eternal frustration. They are going to neutralize astonishing numbers of suspects. Still, attacks will continue. What is worse, most of the anticipated targets will be left alone. Very likely will be understood as shame or even as an affront by loyal state servants, as the sign that they live in irrelevant banana republics where there is nothing to attack. Who knows, maybe patriotic security agents will feel duty-bound to mastermind terrorist acts in order to prove the importance of their motherland.

Huge organizations will collect all sorts of data on the habits, tastes, desires, fears, acquaintances and whereabouts of people and about just everything that may become useful in an emergency that may come, but probably will not. The day may come, however, when the compiled records become accessible. Those who may live that long will be astonished to discover in their files copies of long forgotten love letters to persons they hardly remember and their replies. But they

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will be even more astonished to come across bizarre notes by puzzled busybodies of security agencies who will spend sleepless nights to decode the hidden meaning of words about the most easily understandable things on earth.

The opening of archives may elicit hopes in the most naive citizens that they are no longer under close surveillance. But state administrations do not deal with symbolic issues. They occupy territories which they are not ready to relinquish. They will not be disposed to give up vast areas of everyday life over which they will keep an eye, no matter how futile the exercise happens to be. Eventual access to information about pervasive controls will only mean that with time controls become rationalized, that restaurant bills, romantic correspondence and reports on presumably subversive pet shops will be less important for secret service officials than other material. The bureaucracies they belong to are not required to prove their utility. On the contrary: the more ineffective they are, the more they can apply for funds to broaden their field of action. When all is said and done, their very uselessness is bound to legitimate their constant growth and, above all, in circumstances that are understood as a war in the dark.

All of this may sound like a clumsy conspiracy theory, especially at a time when it is too early to prefigure emerging scenarios. For all that, such a script is hardly more paranoid than widespread hypotheses about a plot meant to paralyze a superpower and the world economy, just because of some confusion brought about by the destruction of three famous buildings. A script of this sort is hardly more obsessive than rallying nearly the entire world for a holy war against an elusive foe or to speculate about new forms of warfare, only because a murderous action of sabotage turns out to be much more spectacular than others of its kind.

A vague anxiety concerning the future of civil liberties is perhaps understandable on account of meddlesome bureaucracies taxpayers are already financing. Apprehension to see political expediency getting the upper hand over anything that would resemble legality seems warranted by the new habit of designating by administrative fiat individuals as terrorists and states as the ones which protect them. Fears to become engulfed in a potentially slaughterous free-for-all are not at all groundless in light of the track record of governments regularly calling for humanitarian wars in order to fight their recent allies and of security agencies manipulating underground organizations which manage to become increasingly independent. The suspicion that obviously inept secret services may obtain *carte blanche* for their operations is not that unfounded, given their track record and the supposed need to wage an undercover war of an unprecedented scale.

Yet, the dust has not settled. One can only wait and see. But until when? Until the time when dating messages become suspect of calling for terrorist acts?

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So, This is the Brave New World Order!

Paul Piccone

Celebrated with so much fanfare at the conclusion of the Cold War as "the end of history," the beginning of "a clash of civilizations," or the arrival of Nirvana, the new world order did not seem to have materializedin the US. It eventually faded from view, as do all media-generated non-events. Even in Western Europe where, after a flurry of long-overdue institutional house-cleaning, the contracted political spectrum grudgingly coalesced around old-fashioned social democracy as the most convenient option, things gradually went back to normal. The project of unifying Europe in order to create a third superpower to counterbalance the US and the USSR no longer seemed to make much sense. Thus, the very project of European unification soon degenerated into an administrative boondoggle, leaving the participating countries practically as they were, plus another layer of bureaucratic obstacles to the kind of development now necessary to compete effectively with the only remaining superpower.

The new world order did, however, have a major impact practically everywhere else in the world. In the former USSR, and to a significantly less extent in its East European satellites, the collapse of communist regimes has meant major socio-economic and political problems that remain largely unresolved after a decade of mostly failed attempts to introduce meaningful "reforms." In most of the Third World, despite genocidal catastrophes and occasional misguided Western interventions, most of the regions' sudden post-Cold War geopolitical irrelevance has paved the way for international "benign neglect" and gradual social disintegration. As for Latin America and Japan, their seemingly perennial economic crises indicate at least an inability to adjust to whatever new conditions now exist.

The US seemed to have been affected least of all. Life generally went on pretty much as before. Whatever was "new" did not seem to be related to any "new world order." Even the wave of prosperity that characterized the 1990s had little to do with recent geopolitical developments. What was initially heralded as a huge "peace bonus" never really materialized, and the economic boom of the 1990s was the direct result of the cybernetic revolution precipitated by the widespread introduction of computer technology not only in industry, but in all facets of everyday life. Not surprisingly, during the past couple of years there has been hardly any talk of a "new world order." The events of September 11 have changed all that. In addition to all the dead, the immense material damage, and the lingering economic consequences, there has also been a collective loss of innocence concerning international affairs. Suddenly, everyone seems to realize

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that there is indeed a new world order that defines every corner of the earth. Understanding its structure and dynamics in order to confront its new lethal challenges is now a matter of life and death.

Recycling the New as Part of the Old

Collective failure to come to terms with post-Cold War realities is already taking its toll as the unprecedented crisis unfolds. After all the dust will have settled, the smoke dissipated, and the ruins of what was the World Trade Center removed — when the time comes to think about what the events of September 11 mean — the bankruptcy of Western political thought is likely to contribute to the general confusion, proving unable to make sense of the new predicament and to help navigate the uncharted waters of the 21st century. The failure to think through the implications of the new world order translates into a recycling of worn-out Cold War ideologies. The predominant theoretical vacuum generated by conformist, one-dimensional academic thought and by general political apathy concerning international affairs makes it possible for particular interests to instrumentalize the crisis to advance Left and Right political agendas, hitherto stalemated by traditional obstacles. To the extent that both sides of the political spectrum have long since collapsed into a flaccid center ultimately advocating New Class domination, the most likely outcome of all this is likely to be an acceleration of those same centralizing trends typical of the 20th century.

Already, in attempting to provide an explanation even before recovering fully from the shock of September 11, most Left ideologues are carefully reconfiguring, even if in poorly qualified euphemisms, the kind of analysis they have been articulating for years, i.e., that in pursuing a "new and improved" imperialist foreign policy and carelessly flexing its military muscles during the last few decades, the US has alienated most of the rest of the world — especially Third World countries, increasingly unable to modernize and participate as viable political actors in determining the direction globalization will take, thus at least temporarily buffering the disintegration of their particular cultures. *Ergo*, September 11 has to be seen as a misguided, but ultimately understandable response from desperate people trying to fight back in any way they can. Bottom line: the US finally got what it deserves. Deplorable as the death of thousands of innocent people may be, this is precisely the sort of cataclysmic mayhem the US has caused for years — most recently, with the Vietnam war, the Gulf War, Kosovo, etc. Thus, the initial horror gradually turns into yet another indictment of US policies, globalization, and, indirectly, into a covert apology for the anonymous terrorists, increasingly cast, in the most extreme cases, as yet another group of "freedom fighters" — even unselfish "saints" willing to sacrifice themselves for a cause.

By the same token, as can be surmised by the first wave of "anti-war" demonstrations, the paucity of concrete radical alternatives automatically translates Left criticisms into the same pious proposals predicated on the kind of secularized Christian values the Left otherwise dismisses as terminally Eurocentric:

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calling for more centralization of a democratically legitimated power to contain the destructiveness of private capitalist interests running amuck throughout the world, more global equality (presumably modulated by the UN and other international bodies), and ultimately, an acceleration of all the disruptive modernizing and homogenizing trends responsible for the contradictions the new wave of terrorism is allegedly reacting against.

Not much better are the analyses flowing from an even more confused and fragmented Right united, at best, by vague attempts to hold on to a traditional political framework that probably never was and certainly will never be. The wave of spontaneous patriotism triggered by the September 11 attacks is immediately interpreted as an expression of the sort of 19th century irredentism that cultural and economic globalization has long since rendered obsolete and irrelevant. Thus, the first policies it targets are the permissiveness of current immigration policies, lax border controls, freedom of movement, and the general openness that economic globalization requires as one of its main preconditions. As in the case of Left responses, the Right is also likely to instrumentalize recent events to reiterate ever more forcefully its standard criticisms of the Left and of recent liberal government policies — especially those concerning civil rights, redistribution, privacy, etc. An impossible isolationism combines with a desire for revenge that immediately translates into a call for massive military intervention with undefined objectives against unidentified and therefore all the more elusive targets.

Surprising, however, is the extent to which the policies that the Right considers necessary to prevent further terrorist acts overlap with those proposed by the Left: a blank condemnation of a poorly understood *economic* globalization (while implicitly encouraging ever more *cultural* globalization), more centralization of power (especially in law enforcement), containment of US foreign policy (primarily along isolationist lines), and a substantial expansion and modernization of a military establishment still fantasizing about unnecessary missile shields and other costly weapon systems designed to fight yesterday's wars, while struggling hopelessly to reconfigure itself into a global police force able to confront new threats it can neither understand nor identify. This explains, among other things, the Right's obsession with desperately attempting to locate a country (or countries) against which to go to war. Traditional American ideals of freedom, democracy, equality, difference, compassion, etc. gradually fade in favor of a cynical *Realpolitik* unwilling to come to terms with an already globalized world. To a large extent, this ends up reinforcing the kind of picture of the US that anti-American propaganda has been painting for years: a smug, self-centered power with no real values, insensitive to its international obligations, and armed to the teeth in order to impose its imperialist agenda by force, whenever necessary.

Capitalizing on the Unexpected

Obviously, it is as utopian at this point to expect the widespread call for revenge throughout the US and much of the rest of the world, justified as it may be

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by the five thousand plus victims and all the yet-to-be understood collateral damage, to translate into compassion for Third World woes, as it is hysterical to call for a total mobilization threatening to alter irreversibly the very fiber of American society. This state of affairs creates a strategic vacuum that can be readily filled by opportunistic political interests to advance particular agendas impossible to impose in normal times. Thus, the US government's official definition of the September 11 events not simply as "criminal acts," but also as "an act of war," is as misleading as the Left opposition's attempt to downplay its importance to a mere misguided Third World response, or predominant interpretations by the Right as the end result of US international laxity ultimately traceable to national decadence and nihilism (as at least some spokesmen of the religious Right have not hesitated to claim). Yet, whether consciously orchestrated or, as is more likely to be the case, improvised simply as the first knee-jerk response by a government that has hitherto been attempting to distance itself from its international obligations, the Bush administration's definition conveniently feeds into a strategy whose intended or unintended consequence is a significant enhancement of the power and prestige of the US executive branch of government, whose mandate, as a result of an unprecedented electoral *pastiche*, has been extraordinarily weak. Unless carefully handled, however, this unexpected silver lining in the dark cloud of terrorism may sow the seeds for even more destructive black clouds in the near future.

Here, the very definition of the nature of the war — the determination of who is really the enemy and who can be counted on as a friend — is crucial. Classifying the September 11 events uncritically as "an act of war" entails serious consequences. Unless one downgrades the concept of modern war (as developed by several centuries of European international law) to a mere metaphor, such as in "the war on drugs," "the war on poverty," "the war on crime," or even "a new kind of war," it is not possible to wage war against private persons or groups, especially if hidden in several countries in far away continents. In the strict sense, a modern war could only be waged by a nation-state against another nation-state — or at least a nation-state in *modus nascendi.* Thus, the US government, and whatever coalition it will be able to put together, needs to find a particular country to wage war against. If Osama Bin Laden and his organization, al Qaeda, are actually the culprits — as it seems almost certain to be the case (no thanks to the information provided by the surprisingly incompetent US intelligence agencies, which obviously, despite countless warnings, either had no clue as to what must have taken years to plan, or had far too much high-tech data to be able to process it into a credible analysis) — there are both conceptual as well as strategic problems with the US government's definition. This is why there is so much effort to pin the blame on convenient targets such as Afghanistan and the Taliban, notwithstanding the fact that their involvement was probably limited merely to hosting those responsible for the deed. Worse yet, it is not immediately obvious that trying to bomb them into submission will result in much more than the unrelated satisfaction, in the US and elsewhere in the West, of having annihilated a barbaric

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regime that, at any rate, deserves all the punishment it can get for spectacular past crimes. Such a psychological placebo, however, is unlikely to result in the arrest of Bin Laden, the annihilation of al Qaeda, or in the curtailment of future waves of terrorism — if indeed the terrorists were free-lancers pursuing their own fanatical agenda as the alleged vanguard of a global Islamic offensive.

There is an even more serious problem with the kind of objectives to be achieved by what CNN has already dubbed "America's New War." In traditional wars, there are tangible goals, besides simply defeating the enemy — usually territorial vindications, the elimination of international competitors, the maintenance of geopolitical stability, etc. Since the terrorists have chosen to remain anonymous and have made no demands, it is unclear what objectives the US government can achieve beyond the physical annihilation of a few of the presumed culprits and their allies (in addition to "massive collateral damage"), leaving the original motives untouched and ready to be articulated once again by new waves of fundamentalists unafraid to sacrifice themselves to their cause. If al Qaeda is only a fanatical organization or a group of related organizations tied to no particular state, but with broad popular support in the Muslim world, and their *prima facie* madness, as can be inferred from their sparse pronouncements, translates into grandiose but improbable projects, such as the annihilation of Western civilization — or at least the eradication of all Western traces from the Middle East — then no flurry of missiles can possibly blow the problem out of the political spectrum once and for all. Even if such a war waged against a phantom enemy can be won (a rather easy task, if there are no definite objectives), the social, cultural, and religious causes that seem to have precipitated it remain unaddressed. As in the case of WWI and the questionable Versailles Treaty that concluded it, victory is never enough, unless those vanquished are persuaded to willingly accept the winners' terms.

If, however, in the age of declining nation-states, the US government acknowledges one of the more unpalatable consequences of the new world order, i.e., the privatization of terrorism, and defines what has happened as an "international criminal act," it may become necessary to pose the question of justice within a geopolitical context regulated by some higher international institution able to eventually legitimate whatever punishment is to be inflicted on the culprits — as many seemingly neutral, but ultimately violently anti-American countries and groups have already demanded (including the Taliban). Unless the US disregards national sovereignty and chases after the terrorists in whichever country they may be hiding, thus creating an immense amount of future diplomatic and political problems, it will have to negotiate apprehension, extradition, etc. on the basis of treatises, statutes, or, if there are none, international institutions such as the UN. The long-term costs of empowering even more already too powerful global organizations such as the UN or international tribunals are unacceptable not only in the general interest of safeguarding cultural particularity, global diversity, and regional sovereignty, but also from the traditional viewpoint of a US government that has historically resisted any forfeiture of its own sovereignty

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by recognizing the primacy of any jurisdiction higher than its own. An essential component of US foreign policy ever since the deployment of the Monroe doctrine in the early 19th century, the right to intervene in international affairs without at the same time being accountable to any other authority, is not likely to be compromised in the interest of some abstract concept of international justice — even if the building of global coalitions requires a great deal of diplomatic flexibility. No US government, whether Democrat or Republican, is likely to change this long-standing, unwritten policy, especially now that the US no longer has any comparable international competitors.

At any rate, the September 11 events are no run-of-the-mill criminal acts simply involving the breaking of some written or unwritten law, if for no reason than that the perpetrators define their "enemy" beyond classical concepts, in a global civilizational context where traditional legal institutions, whether nation-states and even international bodies (seen by the terrorists and many *de facto* suzereined countries as US fronts) play only a marginal role. The terrorists' main objective is not simply to instill fear in their intended victims, to demonstrate their power, or to achieve some immediately tangible objective to be eventually negotiated after recognition of the legitimacy of the terrorists-turned-freedom-fighters' demands, but primarily to demonize the political opponent as a *foe* to annihilate no matter what — even at the cost of their own physical self-destruction (martyrdom). Physically annihilating those *directly* responsible for the deed, something unlikely since they have already died in the process, or their allies avoids altogether the question of the adequacy of the punishment of a few individuals or groups for an allegedly collective deed, and threatens to have counterproductive consequences. A crime in the name of a religion such as Islam (or at least some of its more extreme branches) cannot be atoned by exterminating a few of its agents, who automatically become martyrs in the eyes of the remaining believers, thus encouraging waves of new potential "martyrs" to follow the example of their predecessors. A dead Bin Laden may turn out to be an even more effective terrorist than a live one.

Since the culprits have made no public claims, what the terrorists regard as their foe has to be deduced by the targets they have chosen. Contrary to simplistic identification of the US as the enemy *sic et nunc*, the fact that it was the Pentagon, the WTC, and the international aggregation of people that usually transact business in the towers — the center of global capitalism, the heart of the American military establishment, and whatever people benefit from and make these systems run — immediately suggests that what was attacked was what many in the Third World have for years indicted as an oppressive monolithic Western system bent on destroying their local cultures, institutions, and ways of life. And here is what constitutes the first, unstated, yet most important ideological conflict: *the very definition of new enmity lines*. This is why, despite routine criticisms, both in the US and abroad, of the Bush administration as incompetent, unprepared, generally luckluster — or even opportunistic, in its potential

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manipulation of the events to enhance US world hegemony — it at least seems to have understood immediately what are the real political stakes.

By simultaneously reconfiguring the September 11 events as "criminal acts" by a private group of people representing no one but themselves (thus exculpating Islam as a whole, while identifying and isolating the enemy as a few fundamentalist fanatics), but branding these same events as "war acts" (thus leaving open all options concerning possible types of responses), the US government has already succeeded unexpectedly in achieving three main objectives that it could not have achieved under normal circumstances. Since it sees itself engaged in a war, it has a right and a duty to mobilize; but since the enemy is only a criminal enterprise rooted nowhere in particular, but operating anywhere, the US need not bother, at least in the short run, with whatever happens to pass as international law concerning normal wars. President Bush has said as much in his various statements prefiguring intervention anywhere with whatever means necessary. What this means is: a) internationally, greater US world hegemony; b) domestically, a massive centralization of power; and c) operationally, considerably more space within which to pursue whatever course of action the US eventually chooses.

Thus, in rejecting outright the definition of the conflict as a "clash of civilizations" in favor of its more ambiguous formulation, the Bush administration has set the stage for pursuing ever more forcefully its traditional American foreign policy, by reserving for itself the right of intervention into any country *without having to respect national sovereignty*, while at the same time remaining unaccountable to anyone but its own well-mediatized domestic constituency. This rejection of the terrorists' definition of the new enmity lines in sharp civilizational terms checkmates the American conservatives' rush to condemn all Muslims — thus indirectly accepting the terrorists' definition of the conflict. In isolating the perpetrators as pathological expressions of an anti-modern fundamentalism preventing the kind of economic rationalization (globalization) essential for the development of the Third World (but also conducive to an ever greater US economic hegemony), it also isolates domestic isolationists calling for a US international disengagement, or at least for a substantially diminished presence abroad — the kind of presence necessary to pursue essential economic interests such as unhindered access to foreign energy sources. Such a definition, of course, also checkmates criticisms from the Left concerning the "racist" character (i.e., the repression of other non-Western cultures) of whatever war is likely to be pursued, in Afghanistan or anywhere else. Yet, while in the short run the US government's clever definition of the conflict in conveniently ambiguous terms succeeds in more ways than one in responding effectively to the crisis in terms of satisfying popular calls for immediate action, while also pursuing its political agenda concerning centralizing and legitimating its own power, it also leaves unsolved problems that threaten to precipitate even greater crises. The threat of a global *civil war* predicated along religious lines becomes increasingly real.

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The Privatization of Terror and the Universalization of War

Despite the fact that whatever war or wars will be waged are likely to be "no contests," with the US and its allies smashing whatever they will define as the enemy, everyday life is unlikely to return to "normal," i.e., what it was prior to September 11. The misleading characterization of recent events as "war acts" dilutes the traditional concept of war, already muddled in the second half of the 20th century with the spread of partisan wars (or wars of liberation) from the kind of civilized conflict among *legitimate enemies* retaining their respective dignity and humanity — what Carl Schmitt identified as one of the highest achievements of Western civilization — to a clash between *foes*, understood as unworthy opponents with no redeeming value, who cannot just be *defeated* (and subsequently rehabilitated as was the case with Germany, Italy and Japan after WWII), but must be *exterminated.* Worse yet, the battleground is no longer localized but becomes spread everywhere, while the weapons employed are rather different from the traditional missiles, war-planes and ammunition. In the age of high tech, they become readily available to everyone and include everything, from disruption of communication networks, to the pollution of water supplies, to bio-chemical contamination of food and supplies.

Already, both the US and its allies as well as Bin Laden and al Qaeda have redefined the new enmity as obtaining between *foes*, rather than *enemies*. While the Bush Administration has taken great pains to identify as its foe only a very limited number of "terrorists" — already marked for eventual extermination — the Islamic fundamentalists seem to have a much greater group in mind: all of Western civilization. Their most extreme interpretation of Islam, true to the traditional medieval understanding of relations between believers and non-believers, brands *all non-believers* as foes — and this carries the lethal implication, already voiced by Bin Laden himself, that it is the sacred duty of believers to exterminate infidels everywhere, at every possible occasion, by whatever means (including personal self-destruction or martyrdom). This state of affairs creates an extremely dangerous predicament. Even if only a minute number of Muslims accept such a cataclysmic interpretation of the Koran, it terminally poisons relations between non-believers and *all* Muslims. Since, at least in the West, it is not immediately clear which Muslims are moderate and which are extremists — and determined extremists can always pass themselves off as moderates, as apparently was the case with those who crashed the planes into the WTC and the Pentagon — all Muslims end up embroiled in a dark cloud of suspicion. One can only surmise the general panic that would ensue in the US if one or two anonymous terrorists were to wrap their bodies in explosives, dress well, and blow themselves up in a crowd, as has been happening in Israel for quite some time.

This extremist civilizational stand-off, of course, is nothing new. It has been around since the crusades, or at least since the creation of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 20th century, and has not had anything close to the apocalyptic consequences

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that it prefigures. Globalization, however, has changed all that. Thus, the very existence of even a very minute number of fundamentalist fanatics fighting a kind of post-modern *jihad* as phantom warriors, potentially invisible in the hyper-mobile global new world order, *automatically imposes the radical fundamentalists' reading of the new enmity lines* — no matter how forcefully the US administration attempts to defend its alternative definition of the new state of affairs.

The upshot is that, no matter how much everyone — including most Muslims the West — emphasize the marginality of the radical fundamentalists in their midst, *all* Muslims end up potentially at risk, and the conflict tends to deteriorate precisely into the kind of clash of civilizations that all those in the West, steeped in a culture of tolerance and pluralism, desperately wish to avoid. Having shed the territorial rootedness typical not only of old nation-states, but also of traditional partisans or freedom-fighters (whose irregular military character had already rendered obsolete traditional rules of war such as the safeguarding of civilians, the humane treatment of prisoners of war, limitations concerning acceptable weapons, etc.), the new terrorists have already won one major ideological battle. By *privatizing* terrorism beyond the scope of any particular country, they have managed to *generalize* war beyond any particular battlefield, everywhere in the world. No matter how powerful the new anti-terrorist military alliance may be, there is very little it can do to reverse this dangerous predicament. Unless *Muslims themselves* decide to eradicate or otherwise deactivate the radical fundamentalists in their midst — and there is very little indication so far that such is the case — the die has been cast. The character of the new world order is going to be conditioned significantly by the terrorists' choice: it may very well become much more difficult for a culture such as Islam to co-exist peacefully with others, despite the wishes of the overwhelming majority of its adherents. This can only mean the marginalization or even the ostracism of otherwise moderate Muslins in the West, and the disengagement of the West from the Muslim parts of the Third World — precisely those most in need of Western engagement in order to escape poverty through modernization and all the economic benefits that globalization can bring.

No matter how successful the current military operations against the alleged terrorists and their hosts may be, they can only result in phyrric victories if these contradictions of the new world order are not confronted, not only by Muslims themselves, but by the West as well, for which they present themselves in a different guise. Even if defeated in Afghanistan and everywhere in the Middle East, violent pre-modern reactions are likely to explode again elsewhere at any time, unless its causes are eradicated *to the satisfaction of all, rather than just the winners*. This is why, even if all of the chastising of fundamentalist Muslims will have had the desired results, it is still essential to understand the real sources of the new conflicts — no matter how successful the US will have been in fine-tuning its own definition of enmity and vanquishing its designated foes.

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The Paradox of Modernization

Despite all the postmodern mystifications written about "Orientalism," the impenetrability of other cultures, or the difficulties involved in safegarding the "otherness" of the other, the problem with Islam turns out to be of a much more pedestrian nature. It is exactly the same one that Europe confronted a few centuries ago, when the bloody religious wars resulted in a stalemate prefiguring interminable conflicts. The eventual solution, unpalatable to practically all of the participants, but ultimately unavoidable, was the acknowledgment of the legitimacy of religious views other than one's own, and the deployment of tolerance as a fundamental political principle. While it took a long time before it was accepted by all warring factions as a fundamental constitutive principle of modern society, rather than as merely a tactical maneuver to gain time until the balance of forces shifted in one's favor, such a seemingly innocuous procedural move, in addition to its obvious positive impact, has also had devastating consequences for all the religions involved.

To the extent that all religions require belief in the absolute truth of their doctrines, they cannot accept the validity of other faiths without at the same time undermining their very foundations. The inevitable outcome of this state of affairs is secularization and the eventual delegitimation of *all* religions — or their degeneration into various voluntary associations with no binding norms and requiring only the most feeble of commitments. This is why Islamic fundamentalists, along with the fundamentalist branches of all other religions, consider modern society (especially the US) as lacking real values, superficial, and really committed only to consumerism and capitalist profit — despite the much higher rates of church attendance in the US as compared to most other countries, and the high percentage of people acknowledging adherence to various institutionalized religions. The absolutist character of religion allows for no competitors. When there is no alternative to accepting the legitimacy of all others in order to guarantee tolerance of one's own, the absolutist aura is lost and all religions are forced to take a back seat to compulsory secular institutions.

So the stark choices confronting fundamentalists is either a pre-modern purity guaranteeing moral integrity, absolute values and a solid personal identity, or the acceptance of the validity of the other, the weakening of its doctrines, and eventual secularization. *Tertium non datur*. The second option is only possible if secular institutions are either already established or in the process of being established. Lacking such a framework — especially in places such as Afghanistan, where decades of war have destroyed practically all institutions — it becomes much easier for fundamentalism to pose as the only meaningful alternative and to take on the most extreme forms. If the secular path leads to a weakening of binding norms, the fading of traditions, and the eventual dissolution of strong pre-modern personality structures, the fundamentalist option exacts an even greater toll: the rejection of modernization, disengagement with the West, and perennial poverty.

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Instrumentalized throughout the Cold War as pawns in a conflict in which most Third World countries — especially Afghanistan — had little or nothing at stake, the sudden collapse of the USSR not only left them in a state of strategic irrelevance but forced them to rely on the only cultural resources at their disposal. Under pathological geopolitical conditions, as have developed in the last few decades with the failure to solve the Israeli-Palestinian problem (largely because of the fundamentalists' skill in manipulating both sides), the inability to conclude the Gulf War, and most of all the failure to reform the internal political framework of Arab countries, it is understandable how the Taliban and Bin Laden could take advantage of the general disintegration and cynicism to impose their own agendas. Bombing them out of existence, if at all possible by means of conventional warfare, solves nothing beyond satisfying the all-too-justifiable demand for justice by all those who have been directly or indirectly victimized.

Despite its detrimental implications, modernization is unavoidable. The real problem is how to avoid or minimize the kind of disruptions it precipitates, thus leaving as little space as possible for fundamentalist reactions to wreak havoc not only on an already devastated Third World, but as the September 11 events indicate, on the rest of the West as well, now inextricably embroiled within a new world order. Neither the initial Western "benign neglect" nor, after its failure, the military "massive retaliation" that follows it, help much here. A new approach is needed which, however, is going to be difficult to develop before the West comes to terms with how the paradox of modernization manifests itself within the a postmodern world that smugly assumes it has long since solved these problems.

Making the New World Order Less "Brave"

Regardless of how misguided, ethnocentric, and dogmatic is the terrorists' rejection of what the West celebrates as a neutral and universally-valid "modernity," it betrays a weakness that Western liberal ideology, unable to break with the old Cold War *Realpolitik*, refuses to acknowledge. Consequently, it tends to occlude a viable understanding of the new political realities. It is the same weakness that Silvio Berlusconi carelessly exposed when he asserted what practically everyone in the West believes, but dares not say, i.e., the "superiority" of Western civilization. Regardless of the redundant character of the claim (after all, practically every culture regards itself as superior to all others), what this implies is the *particularity* of Western civilization in general and of modernity in particular — a particularity which, lacking any transcendental universal validity, has no normative import for other cultures and can only be extended through persuasion. The predominant modernist ideology pretends to pay lip service to this problem by advocating "multiculturalism," but in fact all too often imposes its universalistic norms as inviolable absolutes on whichever culture seems to violate them. It is the same contradiction within Western culture that takes the form of "political correctness," i.e., the transformation of seemingly procedural rules into binding

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substantial norms, which ultimately subvert any pluralistic order.

In the pretended universality they uncritically assume, modernity, liberalism and Western civilization in general, especially as exemplified by their most successful expression, American culture, present a lethal threat to all non-Western cultures, whose particularity is guaranteed while at the same time automatically demeaned as pre-modern and *ipso facto* inferior. Worse yet, in the case of American liberalism, which most forcefully seeks to guarantee the legitimacy of *all* particular cultures, turns out to be part and parcel of one particular culture, thus unable to stand above all others as a kind of universalistic umbrella. It is ultimately the product of a particular historical experience of a particular people: a secularized variant of the kind of Protestantism predominant at the time of the founding of the US. All of its main tenets, first and foremost "tolerance," "diversity," "heterogeneity," "the primacy of written law," "individualism," "human rights," etc., no matter how desirable they may seem, have no universal validity, are not binding on anyone other than those who explicitly subscribe to them, and can only be spread by *persuasion*, never imposed on those from other cultures whose practices seem to violate them. It so happens, however, that this particular culture, in articulating its particular values, provides the preconditions for a new pluralistic world order where conflicts are reconfigured as peaceful competition, and persuasion displaces coercion — even if all too often it turns out to be incapable of sustaining such a program and relapses into the kind of ethnocentrism typical of all fundamentalisms (its intransigence toward discrimination of any kind, the demonization of smokers, insistence of the primacy of the individual, etc.).

Obviously, there are no easy answers, and exactly how "brave" the new world order will remain depends on far too many variables, not all of which are within reach of the anti-terrorist alliance, redefined by the terrorists as the West *sic et nunc*. Beyond the tightening of security measures throughout the Western world, the unavoidable heightened suspicion of all Muslims as potential terrorists, the further centralization of power by all governments, and, worst of all, the increasing marginalization of a Third World in desperate need of Western assistance, it may be possible to displace Western universalism — its own variation on fundamentalism — with equally effective, but less coercive alternatives such as contractualism, federalism, skepticism, and above all, a great deal of more responsibility by those whose power seemingly exonerates them from having to come to terms with consequences of their earlier geopolitical strategies. The September 11 events have driven home the fact that, while the Cold War is really over, managing the new peace will require even more engagement to make sure that globalization does not deteriorate into more Western opportunism, cultural homogenization, and the instrumentalization of most of the world's population to the imperatives of a capitalist accumulation that, as Marx foresaw, has long since ceased to make much sense. The alternative is collective paranoia, social hyper-militarization and a re-fragmentation of the world which is ultimately in no one's interest.

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Review:

The Dilemma of Managerial Liberalism

Paul Edward Gottfried, *After Liberalism: Mass Democracy in the Managerial State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) xiv+185 pp.

The title of this book refers to the practice and ideology of contemporary Western societies, which, in Gottfried's view, bear little resemblance to historical liberalism and in many ways have its opposite. Where, after all, is the division and limitation of power, the protection of private property, and recognition of an inviolate private sphere where the state has no business? How can an order be "liberal," in which social planners reconstruct the human soul, or "democratic," in which government feels itself entitled to reconstitute a people it finds lacking? Nevertheless, what Gottfried describes is managerial liberalism, which has become the engine of the managerial state.

The contemporary managerial liberal state represents the convergence of several lines of development that have had the cumulative effect of demolishing the bourgeois liberal order. A prominent aspect of this book is its reconstruction of the history and sources of liberalism, and Gottfried presents the story comprehensively: the struggles between classical and revisionist liberals, the expansion of the franchise, the growth of public administration and the welfare state, the attacks on bourgeois culture, the ever-broader demands of pluralistic ideology, the attempts to re-educate the public, and the medicalization of dissent. He emphasizes the novelty of the form of political society that has emerged, the seriousness of the opposing tendencies within liberalism that the new order had to overcome, and the difficulty opposition now has finding any footing in a society that at all points has become thoroughly dependent on public administration.

The regime now common to all Western societies follows a well-defined pattern marked by entitlement programs, sexual and expressive freedoms, and the disappearance of self-government. Politics is inspired by the view that government exists to promote individual gratification, and with that justification administrators dominate the whole of life. Managers run everything, appealing to expertise, equity, and the need to battle prejudice by sensitizing and re-educating citizens. Social welfare programs divert resources to government and reduce the need for institutions other than the state bureaucracy and various contractual

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arrangements. "Inclusiveness" abolishes all connection between the workings of society and any specific cultural heritage, so that only rational formal institutions that the state can easily control remain important. The drive to eliminate prejudice establishes a comprehensive system of control over social life, and destroys the attitudes and habits — sex roles, religious ties and standards, ethnic and cultural loyalties — on which independent and especially non-market institutions rely for functioning and strength. The personal has been transformed into the political.

Despite the comprehensive control of society by this managerial liberal state, its ideology enables power relations to remain hidden. Although the ambition to transform social relations has eliminated any liberal antipathy to the use of force, that antipathy remains as basic as ever to the liberal self-understanding. Since the purpose of government is understood to be individual self-gratification, it is thought that it can have no substantive ends other than those of the individual. Its activities are therefore understood as assistance, therapy, or the defense of individual rights, while resistance is viewed as harassment, violence, or psychological pathology. The liberal claim to accept the authority of science and reason remains, but truth and logic are supplemented by junk science, tendentious scholarship, ostracism of dissenters, and suppression of thought when discussion threatens to go the wrong way.

Gottfried has little trouble demonstrating the inaccuracy of the "liberal" self-image and the inadequacy of common scholarly accounts. The contemporary liberal state does not leave people alone, and is neither indifferent to their values nor afraid to exercise power for the sake of overriding and changing them. It is manifestly not a broker among competing interests; the opposition between government policy and popular attitudes on such issues as immigration and affirmative action is evidence enough of that. It is in fact an imposing system of power, backed by a huge public sector, by lower and middle class recipients of public assistance, and by media, journalistic, and expert defenders, whose importance is enhanced by the regime's power.

The dispute between old-fashioned liberals and democratic reformers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries ended, of course, in victory for the latter. Circumstances were against the bourgeois liberal view. Urbanization and economic growth favored democratization, as did cultural trends. The period of bourgeois liberal civilization has been marked by intellectual and cultural efforts to destroy it — materialism, atheism, etc. — that continue today with postmodernism. Economic, social, intellectual, and cultural factors converged to transform practical politics. The English Liberal Party made the transition from the old liberalism to the new between 1910 and 1914, the basic institutions of managerial liberalism were in place in Scandinavia by the 1920s, and after 1945 they became universal in the West. Since 1989, there has been a general collapse of coherent opposition, even in thought, to the managerial liberal regime.

That regime is enormously successful in many ways. Gottfried's emphasis

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on its popular support is particularly valuable as an antidote to the expectations of some opponents that a wave of popular discontent is going to sweep it away and lead to a revolution or restoration. The citizen-clients are thoroughly attached to their entitlements, and have come to believe (especially the women among them) that government should above all be caring. Acceptance of pluralism and the fight against discrimination as moral and social imperatives has become almost universal; concerns about self-government and moral traditions do not carry remotely similar weight. Financing social welfare programs may be a chronic and serious problem, but radical change is unthinkable.

Popular support for specific programs and acquiescence in others is, however, combined with dissatisfaction with the whole. People no longer believe the regime's rhetoric of freedom and democracy; it is too obvious that government ignores the will of the people and presents justifications for its policies that are false or contradictory. The increasing irrationality of liberal practice and ideology — the intolerant tolerance, the suppression of free discussion in the name of openness, the reliance on bogus claims of expertise — points to an inner incoherence also manifested in postmodernism. To some degree, that incoherence is no doubt what accounts for the radical conflicts among theories of liberalism. Is contemporary liberalism continuous with the liberal past or a new departure? Is it afraid of power or power-mad, tolerant or tyrannical? Does it suffer from relativism or moralism? Intelligent observers disagree on such basic points, and the reason is the contradictions at the heart of liberalism.

Gottfried suggests that the contradictions between claims of democratic freedom and the reality of managerial rule, possibly exacerbated by failure to deliver the promised prosperity and security, are likely to lead to a crisis of legitimacy. He declines to foretell the future, however; even if discredited, old understandings and arrangements can last a long time when there is nothing to replace them, and at present there is very little to offer. The response of neoconservatives, communitarians, and the religious Right to the overwhelming success of managerial liberalism has been to construct a social criticism that, as Gottfried points out, concentrates on cultural, moral, and spiritual issues in isolation from social realities. Such critics make no complaint about the current organization of power, but suppose that its consequences for people's character, aspirations, and mutual relations would be different if different people were in charge. An older traditionalist Right, concerned mostly with failures of the moral and spiritual imagination, is still more removed from issues of social organization.

Gottfried believes that a postmodernist New Right in Europe has a more realistic understanding of the nature of the managerial state and its ideology, but it too fails to offer a persuasive alternative. He sees populism as the principal current challenge to the managerial state. In a sense, that view is correct almost by definition: if management by experts is the problem, the solution must involve more authority and participation on the part of the people, and therefore a populist

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element. But populism has its problems, some of which Gottfried touches on. For example, populism has no stable elite and therefore no coherent principles. Unless it becomes an aspect of a larger understanding of society that could only be articulated by an elite, and therefore becomes less populist, it cannot define and limit itself and so become part of a stable political constitution. Lack of settled principles made past populist movements sporadic, easily diverted, and unable to make enduring changes that advanced their fundamental goals. It is not clear what there is in present movements that makes them different, or what they would do in power that would much change things.

In recent years, as Gottfried points out, populist movements have often incorporated an emphasis on free markets and other aspects of 19th century liberalism that offer a way to weaken managerial elites and give popular attitudes and habits more play. Nonetheless, the popularity of many social programs has made it impossible to be consistent in this regard. A difficulty populist movements now face is that in general the managerial regime addresses material concerns better than any competitor, and popular consensus on cultural issues has diminished to the point that raising them exposes a movement to effective attack as extremist or fascist. Populist leaders have therefore become opportunistic in their approach to issues. It is therefore doubtful that populist movements are a serious threat to the regime. Electorally, they have been most significant in Catholic societies, especially those in which the state has weak historical credentials. Even in such special circumstances, however, they have remained minority protest movements, more successful in making issues visible than in doing much about them. What relative popular success recent populist movements have gained has been based on immigration, distrust of established politicians, and dislike of a state bureaucracy that manages to be both interfering and unresponsive. Concern over immigration has less to do with cultural issues, however, than with jobs, crime, and strains on entitlement programs. There may be some interest in a stripped-down populism that jettisons cultural issues in favor of concerns regarding physical safety, standard of living, and bureaucracy that is oblivious to popular concerns. Whether any such movement could much change the direction of managerial society is doubtful.

That does not, of course, mean that managerial liberalism will last forever. Populist movements may be harbingers of a more articulate and comprehensive challenge to managerial society. Beyond that, the current regime has intrinsic weaknesses that the author does not dwell on, as well as the strengths he notes. One issue Gottfried touches on briefly, only to dismiss, is whether the current regime may be changed into something quite different by social incoherence resulting from making pluralism an enforceable absolute, and by corruption, inefficiency, and inability to maintain the competence and loyalty of its own elites. He shrugs off worries about crime, and holds that the regime can manage administratively, through warehousing and therapy, whatever behavioral problems may result from the general loosening of informal social ties and traditional standards

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of behavior. He suggests that the tasks of the regime will become more difficult to the extent "diversity" comes to include more Third World immigrant groups that reject pluralism. However, he does not deal with other cultural problems created by managerial liberal ideology, e.g., the difficulties managerial liberal society is likely to have generating the competent, loyal, and motivated elites upon which it depends. In fact, he appears to take elite loyalty and efficiency as given.

It is not obvious, however, that bureaucracy, therapy, political correctness, and managerial science can substitute for moral habits and attitudes of the kind that in the past have supported orderly and productive social life. Managerial liberalism radically weakens the informal moral connections that tie people to those around them and to society at large. The weakening of such connections makes resistance to the managerial regime more difficult, and to that extent strengthens it. However, without them it is not clear that those subject to the regime will retain the loyalty and discipline needed to induce sacrifice of private interest to the public good. Scientific management cannot eliminate the necessity of such sacrifice on the part of officials and institutions tempted to abuse their positions, and often on the part of the people in general, especially in times of crisis. Nor is it clear that egalitarian individualism comprehensively institutionalized can be reconciled with successful childrearing, or politically correct suppression of thought and discussion with success in the comprehensive administration of social life. Such issues relating to culture and morality are contentious, no discussion would satisfy everyone, and it would be difficult to do more than sketch the main considerations without writing a much longer book. Nonetheless, the questions are important enough for the future of managerial society to suggest that at least a sketch would have been helpful.

The abolition of informal and therefore particular cultural tradition as a basis for social order has serious consequences. In a comprehensively administered society, a crisis of legitimacy and rationality can readily become terminal. A state that has become thoroughly irrational, corrupt, and unable to call on the loyalty of its people can hang on if other social institutions continue to function. The effect of managerial society, however, is to make all institutions thoroughly dependent on the state. As a result, administrative decadence can lead to social malfunction far more pervasive than any found in earlier forms of society. Thus, in the Soviet case, it led to gross social and economic failure, and then to collapse of the regime, followed by mafia rule and an unparalleled fall in life expectancy. Of course, the differences between Western societies and Soviet society was more than a matter of degree, and reports of the death of liberalism have been both numerous and false. Managerial liberalism has shown a great deal of flexibility, allowing and even subsidizing political opposition, while finding ways to manage it. When needed for efficiency and rationality, it has allowed necessary changes such as economic liberalization. Perhaps it will come to allow a certain degree of autonomous authority to cultural tradition as well, enough to hold families

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together and to maintain a degree of loyalty, discipline, and public spirit. Many neoconservatives advocate just such a policy.

However, cultural traditions are difficult to manage. They are local, informal, non-rationalized, and resistant to bureaucratic fine-tuning. It is impossible to force them to measure up to contemporary standards of equality and inclusiveness. Acceptance of their authority is at odds with such basic liberal tendencies as rationalism, individualism, and hedonism. Managerial liberal society therefore tends to view cultural traditionalism the way Soviet society viewed economic liberalism, i.e., as an enemy with which little compromise is possible. Whatever enthusiasm managerial liberals have had for the welfare state, they never suppressed advocacy of economic liberalism as "greed" in the way they now suppress advocacy of ethnic cohesiveness or traditional sex roles and sexual standards as "hate." Thus, it is doubtful that the regime will be able to make an accommodation with cultural traditionalism. To the extent that it proves impossible to base human relations wholly on constructed, rather than on evolved institutions, the managerial regime will ultimately face very serious and likely insuperable problems.

It is difficult to achieve force and clarity except through limitation, so a reviewer inevitably ends up with topics he wishes had been developed further. Gottfried deals by preference with public institutions and their history, and therefore with general ideas in relation to those things much more than with ideas in their own right, their inner relationships, and the rational grounds for their acceptance. He insists that ideas like pluralism are important and cannot be reduced to expressions of interest or rationalizations of practice. Nonetheless, he does not discuss them much as ideas, and leaves it something of a mystery why anyone should believe in them. He is disinclined to take managerial liberal ideology seriously on its own terms, even hypothetically, or to accept any relation other than opposition between it and other forms of liberalism. Instead of a common liberal essence, he sees only a common name that lends the current regime a spurious continuity with the past. At least in this connection, he does not treat the transformation of ideas in accordance with their inner tendencies as an important factor in history. Where he takes issues of principle seriously on their own terms, it is in passing and by inference. For example, he judges as well as describes the new order, using bourgeois liberalism as the standard, but does not go into his grounds for doing so. He evidently expects that others will find that standard persuasive as well, and even seems to imply that managerial liberalism is in trouble, because it cannot be defended on bourgeois liberal grounds. He does not explain why that should be so, however. While some of his concerns, such as the value of self-government, are obvious, more explicit discussion would have been helpful.

As Gottfried observes, the managerial state is not merely a system of power. Its elites share a genuine belief in their ideology, which profoundly affects their actions. Causes like abortion, gay rights, and mass immigration serve the interests of the managerial state by undermining principles of social organization at odds

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with it, such as cultural and family particularism. Nonetheless, the managerial state has existed in fascist and communist forms as well, and so, as Gottfried notes, ideologies that favor quite different causes could also support it. Cutting short discussion of the autonomous role of principle therefore comes at a cost. If ideas matter, then the intrinsic qualities of managerial liberal ideology likely play an important role in the success of the managerial liberal state, and the developing implications of basic liberal principles in the development of liberal society. A comparative discussion of the older and newer liberalisms' understandings of the world, how the one grew out of the other, and the validity of their respective justifications would therefore have promoted a better assessment of the nature of managerial liberalism, its strengths and weaknesses, and its ultimate prospects. Is its victory over all competitors something that followed from material circumstances and contingent events, or is there a deeper logic? Does managerial liberalism somehow express modernity better than any alternative, so that it is better able to arouse enduring support and can be dislodged only though some radical transformation or rejection of modernity? It is difficult to give a final answer to such questions, but it is impossible to understand the present predicament without dealing with them. *After Liberalism* presents an indispensable analysis of the present situation from a point of view that accepts the importance of ideas, but is nonetheless predominantly institutional. In dealing with the issues it raises so urgently, analysis of power is necessary. Basic philosophical and theological thought — not to mention commitment and conversion — are likely to be yet more so.

James Kalb

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